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In Distrust of Merits

MARIANNE MOORE*

Strengthened to live, strengthened to die for
medals and positioned victories?
They're fighting, fighting, fighting the blind
man who thinks he sees,—
who cannot see that the enslaver is
enslaved; the hater, harmed. O shining O
firm star, O tumultuous
ocean lashed till small things go
as they will, the mountainous
wave makes us who look, know

depth. Lost at sea before they fought! O
star of David, star of Bethlehem,
O black imperial lion
of the Lord—emblem
of a risen world—be joined at last, be
joined. There is hate's crown beneath which all is
death; there's love's without which none
is king; the blessed deeds bless
the halo. As contagion
of sickness makes sickness,

contagion of trust can make trust. They're
fighting in deserts and caves, one by
one, in battalions and squadrons;
they're fighting that I
may yet recover from the disease, *my*
self; some have it lightly, some will die. "Man's
wolf to man?" And we devour
ourselves? The enemy could not
have made a greater breach in our
defenses. One pilot—

ing a blind man can escape him, but
Job disheartened by false comfort knew,
that nothing is so defeating
as a blind man who
can see. O alive who are dead, who are
proud not to see, O small dust of the earth
that walks so arrogantly,
trust begets power and faith is
an affectionate thing. We
vow, we make this promise

to the fighting—it's a promise—"We'll
Never hate black, white, red, yellow, Jew,
Gentile, Untouchable." We are
Not competent to
make our vows. With set jaw they are fighting,
fighting, fighting,—some we love whom we know,
some we love but know not— that
hearts may feel and not be numb.
It cures me; or am I what
I can't believe in? Some

in snow, some on crags, some in quicksands,
little by little, much by much, they
are fighting fighting fighting that where
there was death there may
be life. "When a man is prey to anger,
he is moved by outside things; when he holds
his ground in patience patience
patience, that is action or
beauty," the solder's defense
and hardest armor for

the fight. The world's an orphans' home. Shall
we never have peace without sorrow?
without pleas of the dying for
help that won't come? O
quiet form upon the dust, I cannot
look and yet I must. If these great patient
dyings—all these agonies
and woundbearings and blood shed—
can teach us how to live, these
dyings were not wasted.

Hate-hardened heart, O heart of iron,
iron is iron till it is rust.
There never was a war that was
not inward; I must
fight till I have conquered in myself what
causes war, but I would not believe it.
I inwardly did nothing.
O Iscariotlike crime!
Beauty is everlasting
and dust is for a time.

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Coming in the Summer Issue

Peter Blake: **A.M.G. in Germany—a Study in Stalinization**

Dwight Macdonald: **The Wallace Campaign**, a Political Interpretation

Ancestors (6): **KURT TUCHOLSKY.** First translantion of Tucholsky's famous "Testament." Plus his "Herr Wendriner under the Dictatorship" and a biographical evaluation by Martin Salander.

Anton Ciliga: **Battle of the Churches in Italy**—Catholic v. Communist. (A special article from Rome.)

Nathan Dershowitz: **The Socialist Labor Party**

James Blish: **Slicks and Pulps**

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USA v. USSR

DWIGHT MACDONALD

MOST of this issue deals, unfavorably, with the Soviet Union. It will be asked—and, in fact, *has* been asked—why an anti-war pacifist journal runs such a series at this time. Is this not—"objectively," of course—contributing to the war spirit over here? Is not the commercial press already doing the job *ad nauseam?* Don't almost all of the likely readers of POLITICS already know pretty well what kind of society there is in Russia? Why does POLITICS here—and in the past—devote so much space to criticising Russia and so little to criticising fascism and native reaction?

These questions deserve answers. In general, it may be said that, in the judgment of the editor, and of some contributors, USSR today is in the same position as Nazi Germany was a decade ago: i.e., it represents the main threat to socialist and liberal values. We regard Soviet Communism, and its American friends and dupes, very much as we regarded Hitlerism and Hitler's American supporters. Just as it did not occur to socialists then to keep silent about Hitler's infamies because of Roosevelt's war plans, so there sems no justification for silence now about Stalin's infamies. Nor is it true that the commercial press is already doing the job: there is a difference between criticising USSR as an imperialist competitor of USA and showing how the Soviet system contraverts socialist values; it is the latter task that is attempted here. Finally, the liberal and radical audience to which POLITICS is addressed has had and to some extent still has more illusions about USSR and Communism than about fascism and, say, the Republican Party. The Soviet myth is more powerful than even many of Stalinism's opponents realize; I speak from personal experience. This last point is a capital one, and deserves some elaboration.

The Great Illusion

The superiority of Communism over Nazism as an ideology for export is manifest if one compares Hitler's speeches with Stalin's. The former are hysterical: full of violent emotion, self-contradictory, convincing only to those within the circle of the speaker's neurosis. The latter, paranoid: sober, ploddingly consistent, entirely convincing so long as the central delusion is not questioned. And it has been hard for us to question because it preserves the *means* of 19th century Progressivism—such as rational planning, scientific advance, democracy, popular education industrialization—while quietly dropping overboard the humanitarian *ends* which led both Marxism and bourgeois liberalism to accept these means. Unlike the Nazis, whose ideology was consistent with their practice, the Communists' practice sharply contradicts their ideology. Hitler said frankly that he was going to exterminate the Jews and make the Germans the master-race of Europe; Stalin urges the economic rationality of collectivization (i.e., the extermination of the kulaks) and the building of people's democracy (i.e., the subordination of Europe to Russia). It is the SS man in his raven-black uniform with the death's head insignia as against the Commissar—or, more lately, the People's Minister—in his business suit with a fountain pen clipped in his breast pocket. We are slowly learning that the Commissar is even more deadly than the SS man.

Our education has been slow because our Communists and fellow-travellers have until recently been generally accepted as part of the liberal-labor movement. Compare, for example, "America First" (1938) with the Wallace Campaign (1948). The historical situations are similar: an "unsatisfied," expanding young empire in conflict with the older, sated imperialisms of USA and England; totalitarianism against democratic capitalism; native movements which pretend to be seeking world peace, and enroll their mass following on that basis, but actually advocate a policy of appeasement of the imperialist competitor, whose leaders are, furthermore, not too unsympathetic with that competitor's government. Yet consider how widely the two movements differ. America First was not very successful: it did not put up Lindbergh as a presidential candidate in 1940 and was unable to prevent the interventionist Willkie from getting the Republican nomination. Its modern similar has a candidate who will probably get from 4 to 8 million votes this fall. America First was defensive on Nazism: its leaders felt obliged constantly to reiterate their opposition. But Wallace and his backers openly denounce the USA as the main threat to peace and constantly defend Russian acts of aggression (as in the Czech putsch). America First was not run by Bundists, nor was it closely correlated to German foreign policy; such tactics would have been politically absurd: only home-grown fascism, of the Long-Smith-Coughlin variety, has ever had a mass base in USA; Nazism appealed only to German-Americans. But the Wallace movement is run by veteran Stalinoids and is intimately correlated to Soviet foreign policy (cf. the 24-hour reply Stalin gave to Wallace's recent "open letter"; or the campaign to block the Marshall Plan). Wallace devotes one-fifth of his current campaign book, *Toward World Peace,* to a detailed defense of Russian foreign policy and a mendacious whitewash of such internal Soviet scandals as the suppression of the Trotsky opposition, the forced-collectivization famines, the Moscow Trials, and the forced-labor camps. Can one imagine the America Firsters issuing a similar campaign document defending the concentration camps and the Reichstag fire trial?

In short, Communism is on the offensive, morally and ideologically, while fascism was on the defensive even ten years ago and today—since, after all, Hitler lost the war—is negligible as a force in American politics.

Millions of sincerely democratic-minded Americans still regard an expose of the truth about Stalinism as "red-

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baiting," though it never occurred to them to call the critics of Nazism "fascist-baiters." The really frightening thing is that even in the USA, which came out of the last war unscathed, prosperous and wellfed, the Communists have been able to mount a campaign like the Wallace movement, and to attract to it in general the very people whom the non-Stalinist left must look to for any serious challenge to the status-quo: the younger generation—college students and veterans—plus the more rebellious and idealistic of the older generations, including, alas, many pacifists.

How Much Do We Know About USSR?

In the thirties, some of us became—or thought we had become—fairly well-educated about the Soviet Union. The 1932-3 famines plus the Moscow Trials plus the Communist tactics in the Spanish Civil War plus the partition of Poland and the attack on Finland—the accumulation seemed conclusive. Yet I have recently come to think that I seriously underestimated the evils of Stalinism and the degree of continuity between it and the Bolshevism of the first revolutionary decade. Current books like Shub's *Lenin* and Gliksman's *Tell the West!* have been responsible for this change of mind; as also a review of the whole literature I undertook in preparing the Reading List printed later on. "What a swindle!" I kept thinking as I read the first-hand exposes of Soviet Russia that were published in the twenties and early thirties—books like Emma Goldman's *My Disillusionment in Russia* (1923), *Letters from Russian Prisons* (1925), Malcolm Muggeridge's *Winter in Moscow* (1934), and Vladimir Tchernavin's *I Speak for the Silent* (1935)—and recalled how, in my Trotskyist days, I dismissed them as bourgeois fabrications. Has there ever been a political imposture on this scale?

The younger generation in America, on the other hand, seems to be not even at the level of sophistication I had reached in 1938. The experience of the thirties is not theirs; USSR to them is the wartime ally of the "peace-loving democracies" against fascism; Wallace's apologetics for Stalinism are taken by them at face value—not the least importance of the Wallace movement to the Stalinoids is the chance it gives them to propagate the Soviet myth. This winter I spoke on Wallace on several campuses—NYU, CCNY, Brooklyn, and the New School in New York, as well as Chicago, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Antioch; when I compared Wallace's demagogy to Hitler's or spoke of Communism and Fascism as similar political formations, a perceptible shudder ran through the audience.*

A "scissors' seems to be developing: we middleaged former fellow-travellers of the Bolsheviks are coming to believe, as evidence accumulates, that things are even worse with USSR than we had thought ten years ago. While "the youth" today is more ignorant than we were then; and more uncritically enthusiastic about the Potemkin Villages of Stalinism.

The scissors gape even wider because of a difference in moral atmosphere. We of the thirties were idealists and enthusiasts, ardently believing in certain general principles; when we realized that these were being negated in practice, we turned against Soviet Communism. As long as we could either deny or overlook the terrible facts, we accepted the Soviet Myth; when the facts mounted too high to be ignored, we gave up the Myth. After all, we came out of the fat and peaceful twenties. But the younger generation, which grew up in an atmosphere of war, death-camps, and saturation bombings, is both more cynical than we were and more sentimental; they seem to have developed a peculiar combination of idealism and pragmatism. They don't deny the facts; they simply retort (a) we're just as bad,† which is not true, and even if it were true, would not be to the point; and (b) how could they have done anything else, encircled by imperialist enemies?—an excuse which applies equally to Hitler's system.

Attacked on the level of socialist principles, the neo-Stalinist of the younger generation brushes aside such arguments as abstract idealism. But when the attack is pragmatic, and the facts are insisted on, he justifies the worst horrors as allegedly necessary steps to a highly abstract and speculative future end: the building of a socialist society. A good pragmatist would define USSR by what it does; a good idealist by how it measures up against some ethical norm; either procedure would puncture the Soviet Myth. But the neo-Stalinists work both sides of the street.

USA v. USSR

Let us admit at once—let us, indeed, insist on the point—that all the criticisms made of USSR here and in the following articles could also be made of USA. Ours, like theirs, is an unjust society, where the few have too much and the many too little. Ours is an imperialist State, like theirs, whose leaders lie like troopers and equivocate like lawyers; a militarist State, like theirs, busily preparing for World War III; a repressive State, like theirs, which is about to draft its youth against their will. The American common people, like their Russian brothers, are kicked around from cradle to grave by their Betters, and are inhibited from leading satisfying lives by a massive structure of ingenious and irrational institutions. Our culture, too,

* In France, too, the illusion persists, and not only among students. Cf. *Les Temps Modernes'* early squirming on USSR (even now Sartre ventures no further in criticism than his absurd, perhaps existentially so, concept of "The Stalled Revolution"—or, in Americanese, The Revolution in Deep Freeze). Also: Merleau-Ponty's volume, *Humanisme et Terreur,* which I hope to review next issue; and recent comments on the Soviet system by such otherwise penetrating editors as Mounier (*Esprit*) and Bataille (*Critique*).

† Like the fellow-traveller who, when the destruction of millions in the forced-labor camps was brought up, replied: "How can you dare make such charges when four Negroes were lynched in Georgia last year!" As Arthur Koestler—with whose general view of the USA-USSR conflict I do not agree—very well put it recently: "People who are unable to distinguish between the burlesque of the Hollywood purge and the sinister tragedy of the Moscow purges are Babbitts of the Left."

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is a debased mass-culture, ruled by commerce as theirs is by the Central Committee. Etcetera, etcetera.

The difference is partly one of degree: in USSR all the above unpleasantnesses are carried a great deal further than they are in USA. The rich are richer and the poor, poorer. Imperialism is more vicious: USA bribes nations with massive capital exports (Marshall Plan), but USSR either absorbs them by force (the Baltic nations) or subjugates them by installing a Communist police state (the rest of Eastern Europe). Militarism more blatant: USSR spends more of its national income on war preparation than USA, has four or five times as many of its citizens under arms, indoctrinates its children more systematically with militarist ideas, and dolls up its generals more resplendently (see cover). Repression is much more severe: the American common people have too few civil liberties, the Russians have none at all. Social institutions are more massively impenetrable to popular pressures: the American school system is run by locally elected bodies, the Russian direct by the State. Political institutions are less democratic: Congress and the President do not truly represent the people, but at least they can be thrown out every two or four years, and at least they exercise power within the limits of written rules and after public debate; the 15 or 17 members of the Central Committee rule so far beyond public knowledge and legal control that they could tomorrow order all red-heads to be "resettled" in Kamchatka—and they would be obeyed. Culture is more totally debased: in USA, artists, writers, and intellectuals with the determination or the cash can ignore the commercial market and produce decent work; in USSR, there are no loopholes—the artist cannot create independently of the Central Committee's directives since the State controls the art galleries, the orchestras and concert halls, the theatres, and the book publishers.

There are, further, certain ways in which USSR is not comparable, even in degree, to USA or to any other civilized country today. Is there any other major nation where slave labor exists on a massive scale? Where all strikes are forbidden by law? Where over half the State budget is raised by the most regressive form of taxation: sales taxes, which fall most heavily on those least able to pay? Where colonels get thirty times the pay of privates? Where no figures on national income have been published since 1938 and no price indices since 1931? Whose soldiers, in foreign lands, go crazy at the sight of such luxuries as bicycles, watches, and leather shoes? Whose DP's open their veins rather then return to the motherland? Whose secret police have their own secret courts, which try and sentence without appeal? Where children are officially applauded as patriots for denouncing their parents to the authorities? Where the political authorities instruct writers on prose style, movie directors on montage, and composers on the proper use of polyphony and dissonance? Where citizens may be imprisoned for talking to foreigners? Where emigration is forbidden, and the families of illegal emigres are punished whether or not they had knowledge of the attempt?

The Big Lie

But the differences go deeper. Not only is Reaction, as it was called in the simple old days, carried much farther in USSR than in USA. But this is not done there, as here, furtively and apologetically, but rather as a matter of principle, in the name of Socialism, People's Democracy and other high notions. The powerful workings of ideology transmute these ugly realities into their opposite: they become the principles of a New Order which is asserted to be the glorious reverse of the undoubtedly wicked Old Order.

This is the Big Lie which Hitler once amateurishly peddled, but which the Communists are really putting over. It is not just the absence of truth; it is the very reverse of truth. Black is not called Blue or Dark Brown, but White. The political system which has gone far beyond Bismarck or Louis Napoleon in authoritarian repression is proclaimed as the realization of the program laid down in the Communist Manifesto. The society in which strikes are outlawed and workers are legally tied to their jobs is presented as the workers' fatherland. The world's most chauvinist and militarist government is sincerely believed by millions of Americans to be striving for world peace against the evil machinations of the State Department and the British Foreign Office. The empire that has added vast new satrapies since 1945, while its two chief rivals have either confined themselves to Pacific atolls or (reluctantly) freed their richest subject domains, is gilded by ideology with the moral splendor of anti-imperialism. Most striking of all, a double standard of international morality has been insinuated into the minds of millions of non-Communist workers and intellectuals. Truman is denounced for his Doctrine, which is indeed an evil thing; but the more far-reaching interference of the Communists in other nations' affairs is passed over in silence. The American Legion is properly excoriated for its flagwaving jingoism, but the same thing in USSR becomes transmuted into People's Patriotism in Defense of the Socialist Fatherland. Much is said, again properly, about the moral infamy of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but not a word about the American proposals for international control of atomic energy, accepted by all the other great powers, and recently, after years of dispute, abandoned because of the opposition of the one nation in the world which cannot afford to permit international inspection of its domestic arrangements: the USSR.

The list could be extended. The point would remain the same: the most militarist, imperialist, anti-democratic, and reactionary nation in the world is precisely the one on which millions of Americans and Europeans have fixed their aspirations for world peace, national independence, democracy and human progress. This is a Fact of Life today, and one that must be faced, whether one is a liberal, a Marxian socialist, a conservative, or, as in the case of the present writer, an anarchist and pacifist. The way to face it, in my opinion, is to tell the truth about USSR, without suppression and without compromise. If there is a chance of avoiding World War III, it must be based on truth and not on lies. And certainly not on The Big Lie.

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2. The Background

ANONYMOUS

WITHIN the boundaries of what is now the Soviet Union, there existed, up to 1917, the Russian Empire.

Of this Empire, a Frenchman named Paleologue, last French Ambassador to the last Tsar, writing of the years 1900 to 1914, has left the following description: "The Russia of these years is not, as so many people imagine, to be thought of as a country like some country of Western Europe might be, were it thirty or forty or even fifty years out of date. It is not like this at all. Scratch underneath the surface of the cultural St. Petersburg circle and you are back in a country which is what a *Western European country may have been four and five and six hundred years ago*—back before Western Europe had its French Revolution, or its Reformation, or its Renaissance—back to a country that is still in the darkness of the Middle Ages."

Within this Empire, and up to the very last hour of its existence—that is, up to 1917—the population, of more than one hundred and seventy-five million persons, was divided by both law and usage into five groups called "orders" or "estates". Of these orders, the first two, who were the nobility and the upper clergy, had everything. The third, called "honorary citizens", were allowed to sit in. The fourth, which included merchants, artisans, small bourgeois and some others, lived by favour of the first degree. These four orders, all taken together, amounted in number to slightly less than 20 per cent of the whole population. The remaining 80 per cent, who made up the fifth order, had nothing at all.

Living on the land and cultivating it for a "barin" or master, the members of this order, until 1861, could be, and were, bought and sold, bequeathed in gift, put up to auction, lost or won at play in exactly the same way as the land itself, or any other kind of livestock maintained on it. After 1861, and the Bill of emancipation, they could no longer be bought and sold, or even legally flogged, but the same solid line of demarcation as before continued to mark them off from the four orders above them. As an order they were still the object of special legislation, and a special administration presided over the whole of their lives. In practice, up to the very last hour of the Empire, any member of the other four orders was still, in the eyes of the fifth, a barin or master; and any member of the fifth was a moujik or slave.

In 1914, when the Empire entered on its last and decisive war, 80 per cent at least of its one hundred and seventy-five million inhabitants were totally illiterate. Of the fourteen million Imperial soldiers mobilized "to fight Germany", four-fifths could not have said, and had never had the dimmest facilities for finding out, whether "Germany" was a man, a thing, a village, or a fairy-tale monster.*

In 1917 the Empire ceased to exist, and it was upon the ruins of this social system that Soviet civilization—inheriting the aftermath of a particularly disastrous and demoralizing foreign war, revolution at home and the bloodiest civil war in history; and with further long years ahead of famine, typhus, cholera, and local reversions to cannibalism—had first to rise and then to persist.

For the territories throughout which this civilization was to be spread the conventional geographical symbol "Russia" is both misleading and false. In the sense in which such terms should be used, there never has been, and almost certainly there never now will be, a geographical entity which may correctly be spoken of as "Russia". There has been, and almost certainly always will be, an area of expansion, *radiating from Moscow,* which has been styled successively a principality, an Empire and a Union of Federated Republics; and which has been conditioned by the initiative, military spirit and colonizing genius of a group of people spoken of by the English until not very long ago, and by their neighbours in Europe to this day, as *Muscovites.* The Muscovites, or people living about Moscow, are the people who in the fifteenth century established themselves in Novgorod; who, with Cossack riders recruited in the Ukraine (and with the help of that Cossack institution, the knout), reached out as far as the Urals; and from the Urals spread themselves over the whole of the north of Asia until, from the Volga to the Ob, from the Ob to the Lena, from the Lena to the Amur and beyond, they arrived at the Pacific Ocean; and who have since been, are, and will almost certainly remain, the ruling class throughout successively acquired dominions amounting to at least eight and a quarter million square miles, or one-sixth of the whole land surface of the globe.

It is the members of this ruling class only who, more European than Asiatic, though too not wholly European and differing greatly among themselves, are Russian-speaking; and who think and speak of themselves, and are thought and spoken of by the two hundred or more racial minorities under their rule, as "Russians". . . .

THESE inherited difficulties of the young Soviet Union (or rather of the Russian Bolshevik Communist Party who had assumed power and who were creating the Soviet Union) were further enormously augmented by the nature of what they had set themselves to do. The empire-builders had been concerned only with the comparatively simple business of making themselves rich; with the acquisiton first of salt and then of sables and then of minerals and then of wheat, and last of all, of the trade in otter pelts which, in the eighteenth century and under the influence of the Hudson Bay Company on the other side of the Behring Straits, was beginning to push the little Siberian sables out of the market. Wherever the territory and what-

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ever the local divergences, the guiding principle of the early colonists everywhere had simply been: how much, of what is here already, can we, for our own purposes, take out? Their Soviet successors had bound themselves to the accomplishment of something infinitely more difficult. In the process of colonizing, which, it now appeared, must be begun all over again, it was their intention not to take out but to bring in; and what they meant to bring in, however much it might be disguised as machinery, as implements of agriculture, as telegraph posts, electric light, or other material benefits, was, in fact, a new ethical conception of the universe and of man's place in it, a new moral code and a new system of laws.

The territories throughout which these conceptions were to be disseminated occupy, as has been said, more than one-sixth of the whole land surface of the globe. The human beings who were to embrace the new doctrines numbered one hundred and seventy-five million, of whom 80 to 90 per cent were totally illiterate, with a standard of living abnormally primitive even in Asia and a social consciousness consistent with a status legally identical within living memory (and, in practice, overnight) with that of pigs and goats. They had also to struggle against the climate, the fantastic brevity of certain seasons, the ferocity and length of others, against the nature of the soil, the fallibility of programmes, and the hostility or at best non-co-operation of the outer world. Almost any extract taken at random from the works of Lenin, written between the year 1921 and his death in 1924, may serve as an illustration of the discouraging and almost super-human nature of the task which had seemed comparatively simple in 1917. "Russia", he exclaims, when addressing the Tenth Party Congress in 1921, "has come out of the war in the condition of a half-dead man beaten nearly to death. . . . After nearly seven years of war, the workers and peasant masses of our backward country are in a state of exhaustion rendering them almost incapable of labour. . . ." A little later in the same address he speaks of "a country radically ruined, and populated for the most part by destitute peasants". In his tract *On the Food Tax* he says: "We avoid talking about certain problems, we do not think about them, we overlook them. Not because we are clever and strong, but because we are stupid and weak. We are afraid of facing the bare truth, we prefer much too often the lofty delusion. We repeat all the time that we are passing from Capitalism to Socialism and forget who 'we' are. 'We' are the vanguard of the proletariat, but the vanguard is only a small portion of the population. . . ." In another place he exclaims with even greater discouragement: "Glance only at a map of Soviet Russia! North of Vologda, south-east of Rostov-on-Don and Saratov, south of Orenburg and Omsk, and north of Tomsk, you will see abysses of space which could contain dozens of large civilized states. These territories remain in conditions patriarchal and half-wild, where they are not wholly savage. And of the peasants lost in still remoter corners of Russia, what is to be said? Everyhere, for hundreds of versts, primitive tracks separate (or rather isolate) the villages from the railway stations—that is, from contact with civilization, with capital, with large industries, with the big cities. Is it to be imagined that under such conditions Russia can pass immediately to Socialism?"

CONFRONTED with ignorance and apathy, with "obstruction", "sabotage" and even physical resistance, the Russian Bolshevik Communist Party found itself committed to more and more military expeditions, more and more "industrial penetrations", and—increasingly and on a growing scale after the death of Lenin—to more and more liquidations, "pacifications," mass deportations and "purges". In this they resembled far more a militant sect, whose members are convinced that they alone in the universe are the despositories of absolute truth, than any European political party (neither Fascism in Italy nor National-Socialism in Germany had yet appeared). In exactly the same way as in earlier ages the dogmas of the Christian religion had been held by the Church Militant and the Inquisition to be indispensable to salvation, and were imposed by them on their own heretics even to the last resource of the bonfire and the stake, so the Russian Bolshevik Party believed itself not one whit less fanatically to be under the moral compulsion of dissmeninating its own dogma based on the teachings of Marx, plus the supplements and commentaries of Lenin (from 1917 to 1924 officially known as Marxism-Leninism and known today equally officially as Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism, and both, of course differing widely from Marxism pure and simple). And if there were no other way of disseminating it, they too resorted, as did the Church, to the policy of bonfires and stakes.

To the Party, as to these Churchmen, the heretic everywhere was the individual, the man who preferred his own way of life, however limited, however insecure, because it was his own; worst of all, who preferred his own way of thinking. This individual everywhere had to be subdued, and if he would not be subdued, exterminated. Subduing or exterminating the individual, they were further compelled to the subjection or extermination of all the ways of life, all the human relationships and all the national cultures which chiefly tend to produce that individual. The more different from themselves the societies to be subdued, the more deeply rooted in their own ways of life, habits of thought, traditions, cultures and aspirations, the more urgent this necessity became. To this end they waged a whole series of unpublicized civil wars. To this end they "pacified" whole Republics, as the Caucasus and the Ukraine. To this end they "liquidated" the farmers, the nomad societies of the north and east, and the whole of Socialist opposition within the Party. For the new conception of the universe, the new moral code and the new system of justice were firmly held by themselves to be the best in the world, and the best for those who were to receive them; and they further believed that the ultimate arguments for use against individuals, societies and even whole races, rejecting the Marxist doctrine, were force and the forcible extermination of all earlier codes of ethics.

In Europe and in the countries beyond Europe which have been influenced by our civilization, the standards by which behaviour is assessed, and, in consequence, licensed or condemned, rest eventually on the old Roman law which

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provided, or at least aimed at providing, justice between citizens and between the citizen and the state. By the founders of Soviet Civilization it was laid down that the standard of morality, and consequently of justice, is the welfare not of the individual but of the community, and that by this standard, and this standard only, behaviour is to be assessed and rewards and punishments are to be distributed.

This revolution in ethical standards need not have led, it may seem at first sight, to any great difference in practice; since it can be argued that the welfare of the community in any event depends upon justice between individuals and between individuals and the state. But within the sphere of the new civilization it came to be further laid down that the welfare of the community could be achieved only by carrying out the programme of the Russian Bolshevist Communist Party (or, in other words, of the régime) and this obviously did involve a considerable revolution in the assessing of behaviour. Moreover, just as the régime laid down that the welfare of the community is identical with the fulfilment of the Party Programme, so in time the Communist Party came to be in fact a body of persons *inseparably bound to the support and continuation of the régime;* and so also, as time went on, the legal, judicial and penal systems originally devised to regulate behaviour, not in relation to abstract justice for the individual but only in relation to the welfare of the community, could not in fact do so otherwise than in relation to what was or was not to the advantage of the régime. Further, there being within the Soviet Union no official Christian or other religious standard for assessing behaviour, all moral as well as all social judgments also became possible on this one basis only—all human conduct in fact becoming not only legal or illegal, but also righteous or unrighteous in relation, and only in relation, to its repercussions on the régime. Motive, intention, accident even, must all under this ethical system, be left out of account. Should the State (in the person of the Party) consider that it has been, even accidentally, prejudiced, injured, or even criticized, by word or deed, then the individual responsible has not only legally but also morally offended, and a penalty has to be paid; the penalty being segregation from the community, in one form or another. This principle is applied to groups in exactly the same way as it is to individuals. Any group or section of society or racial block may find itself marked out for segregation, and, following a certain rhythm, for eventual liquidation. Whether the group thus marked out is composed of few or of many, of thousands, millions, or even of a whole nation, does not affect the principle; and does not influence, except in practical ways, its application. . . .

OF the criminals who offend against Soviet morality and who appear before the Soviet courts, many, of course, have committed normal crimes, such as acts of violence, theft, etc. Very many more, however, are the so-called "political offenders" or "socially undesirable" persons. This term is made to cover all individuals or groups or social layers whose existence, however innocuous, could imply so much as unspoken criticism of the régime. In this, as in a number of other fields, Soviet administration has very much in common with former administrations under the Empire. The judiciary reform of Alexander II, carried out in 1864, endowed the Empire with accessible and smoothly functioning courts, admirably organized and with a system of irremovable judges. These courts under the Empire occupied one of the most honourable positions in Europe. Yet, in all cases where the crime could by any means be made to appear as being in any way prejudicial or potentially prejudicial to the defence of the régime, the Imperial Government, for its own preservation and for reasons of domestic policy, progressively renounced in practice all the fundamental principles which had underlain the reforms of 1864. Soviet administration in precisely the same way, and in sum for precisely the same reasons, has preserved and even accentuated this special attitude to this type of crime. Paragraph 58 of the Code is the paragraph most often invoked and most frequently implemented in the Soviet courts.

This paragraph contains fourteen points and covers all the forms of "counter-revolution" defined by the Code, varying from high treason—that is, opposing the régime, arms in hand (Point 2)—to "historical counter-revolution" (Point 13). In practice, there seems to exist in between no conceivable form of human behaviour to which the label "counter-revolutionary" cannot be attached at will by a court applying to all behaviour the ethical standard surveyed above. In striking illustration of this is the fact already noted that the accused can perfectly well be, and very often is, established as a counter-revolutionary before any question as to his behaviour has arisen at all.

It is significant, too, that the average penalty under Soviet law for the act of murder is, generally speaking, a sentence of from three to six years (hard labour), whereas for the simple circumstance of being politically undesirable—however passively or even unconsciously so—the average sentence is from three years to eight, and is almost invariably eight; and that each eight-year term can be indefinitely renewed after expiry should the prisoner outlive the term.

CONVINCED adherents of the régime (inside the Union, and when speaking with sincerity) themselves hardly deny the immense degree of suffering entailed upon an enormous number of people by all this. What they do not admit is, that, suffering or no, the application of the system is anything but unavoidable. To enter into any consideration of individual circumstances, emotions, or impulses, to be concerned with the individual happiness or misery of human beings, would be to hinder the operation of the dogma, and to hamper the fulfilment of the Programme: a Programme which, in earliest days, the dogma was held to have imposed on the orthodox, but which, as the years go by, has come more and more to mean simply that which a body of persons in power have set themselves to accomplish.

In this Programme, very much has been magnificent and everything was on a stupendous scale. . . .

But many of the plans were not easy to put over, outside of those numerically small groups—concentrated, for the most part, in Moscow and other great towns—which

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already accepted the standards and aims of the régime. For the plans, as well as being stupendous, were repellingly austere. The régime, planning, where material comfort or ease were concerned, in terms of generations not yet born, offered only continued privations and the extremes of physical hardship to the generation first charged with putting the Programme into effect. In the same way, it was the generation also which was required to act as mass guinea pigs for experiments which all had their conception in Moscow. Thus, as a single example, the Uzbeks, who for countless generations had been growing rice, were told to stop; and grow instead the cotton which the Union required in order to become self-supporting. Many Uzbeks resisted the order. Resistance was crushed. It was then found that, having no food crop to live on, the Uzbeks starved. Accordingly, they were told to scrap cotton, and to go back to rice. But by that time, the whole of the precious and ancient system of irrigation required for the growing of rice had itself been scrapped, to make way for the very different requirements of cotton-growing. The experiment, in fact, had been aimed at the general good; but it was not one which could endear itself to the particular people who had to put it into practice.

Again, the heavy industry which was built up with a speed that eventually astonished the world was subsidized only by commandeering a crippling proportion of the food produced by the peasants. During this period, millions of Soviet citizens—producers of food—themselves starved to death while the produce of their labour was being sold abroad in exchange for foreign machinery. Very many more were dispatched to forced labour for refusing, or for being unable, to supply the quotas demanded of them by the State.

Throughout these years—while enormous sums in foreign currency were being expended on machinery—nothing at all was spent abroad on tea, leather, fats, cotton or wool. Consumer goods of even the most elementary kind became unobtainable. Even in the large towns, in exchange for wages which on pay-sheets and in reports sent abroad sounded imposingly large, nothing, or almost nothing, could be found on sale in the shops. The standard of living for the mass of Soviet citizens in all parts of the Union was maintained on a level infinitely below the lowest level of the most backward of the European countries. What food, articles of clothing, oil, tobacco, etc. there were, might be sold only through rigidly controlled State shops, and on all such goods there was a massive "turnover" tav. In 1936 the total value of retail trade to consumers was one hundred and six million roubles; and of this sixty-two million went into tax to the State. Two-thirds of this whole tax came from the sale of food alone.

IT cannot be surprising that a Programme involving such a way of life and requiring such total sacrifices did not recommend itself at once to all the peoples of the Union. The rulers, planning for the future, and having faith in those plans, had to ask the people to have faith, too, and to disregard present hardships. In the great towns, in touch with Moscow, and where there was evidence available of the successes achieved as well as of the apparent failures, this faith did grow. In such places, the citizens were sincerely touched by the desire to build a newer and a better world. They did believe that the future would repay them for all. Both Soviet and foreign writers have borne witness to the spirit of hope and endeavour that animated such communities. They were not indifferent—how could they be?—to the hardships, but they were prepared, even willing, to accept them; persuaded that the régime was planning, if not for themselves, at least for the children or their children's children, a better life than had ever been achieved by humanity before. But the further into the interior and the further away from the central inspiration in Moscow, the more rarely that confidence appeared. It was not easy for it to take root at all among that mass of still unassimilated peoples inside the remote and still half-savage territories which make up so overwhelming a proportion of Soviet soil.

Confronted, then, with these further difficulties created by the Programme (as well as with all those left over from the past) it has been inevitable that the régime, from the earliest years, has itself been largely motivated by fear—fear not only of enemies abroad but fear also of discontent and even of revolt within. The way to deal with fear of enemies abroad was to build up a heavy industry and immense armaments—with a success which the whole world has now seen. For the exorcising of fear of disobedience or revolt at home there were two ways. One of these ways was by propaganda and the "plugging" of the picture and voice of Stalin throughout every remotest town, village and cabin of the Union, in order to build up a feeling of personal relationship with one man at the top who could be trusted to take care of everything. In exactly the same way as, in the days of Tsardom, the Tsar himself had existed as a sort of dim and divine Little Father in the minds of even the most unprivileged of his subjects, so Stalin, in his peasant blouse and with his bluff Georgian voice, became the Soviet Little Father even of those least conscious of the benefits of the new régime. The other way was by recurrent purges and trials conducted in public and by the continual and unpublicized suppression of any kind of freedom of thought. Only by the successful exacting of 100 per cent obedience—that is, not from the body only, but equally from the spirit—could the régime expect ever to sleep in safety.

THE LIBERAL MIND: DEEP SOUTH DEPT.

Governor Arnall's statement that he will be party to no subterfuge for defeating the U. S. Supreme Court decision in favor of Negro voting makes fine reading up North and will undoubtedly be put into history books as epoch-making. . . . But what it will do in Georgia remains to be seen. Subterfuge is something Ellis Arnall and all of us in these parts have had to go in for all their lives, because of this race question. . . . To decide that, overnight, we can and must do without subterfuge, is dangerously to ignore vast remainders of racial feeling here. . . . They are better friends to the Negro and to the Nation who proposed a gradual increase in Negro voting, on a basis of genuine qualification . . . employing whatever subterfuge is needed to hold the increase within the limits realism makes necessary in the interests of all.

—John Temple Graves, eminent Southern liberal, as quoted in the Sanford (Fla.) Herald, Apr. 26, 1947 ("SUBTERFUGE: That to which one resorts for escape or concealment; a false excuse." —Desk Standard Dictionary.)

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3. USSR Today—Documents

EDITOR'S NOTE: *This and the following section—"The Workers"—were originally published, in more extended form, in T. Integer's news-letter, "New Views" (505 Fifth Ave., New York 17, N. Y.). I am grateful to Mr. Integer for permission to reprint them.*

Here we have no journalistic swamis using crystal balls in a Moscow hotel room to tell us What The Russian People Think. These are first-hand statements by average Russians or by foreigners who have lived in Russia recently as prisoners or as common laborers. They speak as participants, intimately and even perilously involved, not as spectators. Furthermore, they are all "little people," who see Russian life from underneath. Their accounts are notable for the absence of that polemical virulence, that historical melodrama which colors the books (ghosted by professional Russia-baiters) of ex-big-shots like Kravchenko. The sober, moderate tone makes the dismal picture given of Soviet life all the more convincing. This, one feels, as one did in the earlier writings of "bottom-dog" observers like Yvon and Ciliga, is what life for the average Russian is really like. I know of no other recent reports which give so intimate and apparently authentic an account.

The following section is a report of conversations with Russian prisoners of war in France by Dr. I. Belich, a French woman who was arrested by the Germans and employed as doctor in a camp for Russians deported for work on the coastal fortifications. After D-Day, Dr. Belich continued her work under American auspices. Her reliability, incidentally, has been vouched for to me by a mutual friend in whom I have the greatest confidence.

(a) Some Russians Speak

IT is important to note that none of the prisoners to whom I have spoken knew anything about the old struggles among the various fractions within the Russian Communist Party. Neither did they know much about the famous Moscow Trials. Hardly any one of them had an intelligent notion of the Civil War (1918-1921). And they had a very vague conception of the moral and social issues of the October Revolution. Most of them had no interest whatsoever in such questions. Others carried their distrust of everything taught by the Soviet authorities to an ultimate degree. I was once asked if it was true there was formerly serfdom in Russia.

They had all heard of Trotsky, but they had very fantastic ideas on the subject. Some said he was a general. Others thought he was a famous traitor. As for Lenin, popular legend places him in the rank of true champions of the people's interests, somewhat like the ancient epic *bogatyry*. The prisoners I had talked to believed it was Lenin who had given the land to the peasants and created for them a comfortable and happy life. But then Stalin had Lenin killed. It was a woman who shot Lenin. She used poisoned bullets. The legend is so ingrained in their minds that when I told our first witness, Ivan A., that it was not so, that it was not Stalin who was responsible for Lenin's death, and that three years had elapsed between Dora Kaplan's attempt and Lenin's decease,—he looked at me with an air of superiority and said he knew better what took place in his own country. Otherwise, he would usually consider quietly the explanation offered him. Later, when he saw the picture of Lenin in a French Communist paper, he raged: "How dare they speak in Lenin's name? They have assassinated him and now they pretend he was one of them!"

Generally, the Soviet citizen (the one we have had the occasion to speak to in Western Europe) is not interested in politics. His mind seems to be focussed almost exclusively on such material matters as avoiding hunger, finding enough clothing to wear, not having to work too hard, getting a nook of his own, and not remaining a plaything of the constant changes in the domestic policies formulated and enforced by his rulers. Those, I was told, were the paramount interests of the people of contemporary Russia.

What have three decades of Bolshevik rule done to the famous "Russian soul"? Have they "spiritualized" it, or made it more materialistic?

The question cannot, of course, be answered on the basis of conversations with several dozen men. It is quite evident, however, that the average Russian is now less idealistic than ever before. The descendants of the Narodniki (the Russian Populists of the 70's and 80's) and the Nihilists, and the great grand-children of the Slavic serfs, possess, in the present historic phase, a petty and narrowly materialistic outlook on life.

The liberty to which the men I have talked to aspire, refers to very material things. They are not at all bothered by the lack of freedom of thought. Under the conditions of life that have been created for them (by their rulers) there appears to be no sensible reason for overworked and ever worried persons to become agitated over an issue like the right to think freely. The Russian people are not in a situation to formulate concretely such an issue.

Persons who consider the desire for "spiritual" liberty to be an elemental part of man's makeup will not quite approve of the average Russian's obsession with the question of personal wellbeing. However, the need of such liberty can arise in the individual's mind only when his body is not too exhausted. Otherwise, all his attention is necessarily centered on the one hope of personal physical betterment. No strength or interest is left in him to struggle for such causes as the right to think freely.

Bolshevik absolutism has ridden the Russian so hard that it has killed in him the ability to become aware of such an issue as liberty of thought. On the other hand, it is not impossible that an improvement in the material situation of the Russian mass will evoke an appetite for the so-called spiritual liberties.

1.

Ivan A. is a White Russian, 32 years of age, who has been in France since April, 1944. He is now working in Cherbourg as a welder, a trade he already learned in Russia. He had left his village to find work in industry towards the close of 1933. However, he is still not quite a city man. He professes to love the hardships and peculiar

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ease of rural life. He tells me: "I left my village because life there lost its charm for me."

He divides his life into two very distinct parts: before and after "collectivization."

"Before," that is up to 1928, you worked hard in the summer and you were free in the winter. You lived as you pleased. You could have a good time and drink as much as your soul desired. When the NEP (New Economic Policy of 1921) permitted the peasant to use for himself the land expropriated from the *pomeshchiks* (the landed, noble proprietors) in 1917, peasant Russia experienced a wave of prosperity. Ivan wants to make me believe that his work on his own land enabled him to buy a pair of patent-leather boots, a suit of good cloth, and even a bike. His family possessed two horses, three cows, and they raised annually two or three pigs. After 1917, the peasants had acquired the habit of consuming a good part of their produce, since they had learned from experience that the value of money was quite relative. Many had barrels full of paper money of every description: Kerensky bills, Tsarist notes, Douma rubles, as well as Soviet money that had fallen in value. In 1929, just before the government began to install the *kolkhosi* (agricultural collectives) by military force, the standard of peasant life had reached its highest level in the history of Russia.

"We in White Russia," tells Ivan, "we did not suffer from the 1930 famine. We entered the kolkhosi without offering much opposition to the government. We knew what had happened in the Ukraine."

Ivan's criticism of the Soviet collectives is made from the moral as well as the material angle. He regrets the loss of the old peasant "liberties"—the right to work for oneself, without being subject to a boss, the right to own a horse, the right to take it easy in the winter time after a hard summer's work. He is somewhat bothered by the disappearance of personal initiative in peasant life. Why work hard, he asks, if you always remain in a condition of dependence? Piercing through his story is an instinctive affection for his horse and a spontaneous repugnance for machinism, for tractors. Yet Ivan already has one foot planted in the machine age. He quickly learned the welder's trade when he came to the city. However, he is not attracted by the machine. He accepts it as an inevitable evil.

From the material viewpoint, he blames the kolkhos for the poverty of its members. The collectivized peasant gets the worst quality grain. After the harvest, the best is taken away for export and for government seeding reserves. The rest is left for the producers. And bread is the peasant's chief means of sustenance.

A member of a kolkhos, says Ivan, never has enough to buy sufficient clothes. Before collectivization, the White Russians produced a great deal of flax, out of which the peasant woman made linen to clothe her family. Now the entire flax crop is taken away by the kolkhos officials. It all goes to the textile mills. The peasants were promised cloth would flow from the factories to the countryside. But only insignificant quantities of manufactured articles ever reach the country folk. It is impossible to produce flax on the small piece of land that the collectivized peasant has the right to work for himself after he has finished his tasks for the kolkhos. On these tiny plots the peasant usually tries to grow a little food to supplement his family's insufficient diet. And the Russian winter is severe. You must have warm clothing and warm foot-wear.

The great pleasure of kolkhosian (collective) society was vodka. Everybody drank, young and old, men and women. The Soviet government did nothing against this. You could not show yourself too drunk on the street. Otherwise, drinking was okay.

Ivan states that on the eve of the war the peasantry was far from being patriotic. He holds—and his opinion is confirmed by other prisoners to whom I have talked—that the peasants expected the war to bring them liberty, that is, the abolition of the collectives. The peasants listened eagerly to rumors of an impending war. They hoped the war would result in a change in their favor. So that when the Germans attacked, many peasants were pro-German. They rejoiced at the German broadcasts promising that the kolkhosi would be done away with. Other were skeptical. They said it was best to wait and see what happened. Maybe you could trust the German. But most peasants hoped for a change. According to Ivan at least 50% of White Russian peasantry were pro-German at the beginning of the war. When the Red troops finally entered Finland they were struck by the fact that the Finns lived incomparably better than the Russians. Finnish cleanliness, the fine utensils in general use, the attractive appearance of the Finnish home, the Finns' "rich" clothing—astounded the Russians. Officers as well as soldiers began to pillage. They took everything they could lay their hands on. (Even now that he has traversed Europe from east to west, the Russian Ivan is overcome when he sees women dressed in the "European" style. Russian prisoners freed from the German camps and brought to Marseilles literally threw themselves into the arms of women dressed in the French manner, that is, women of the streets, who represented to them the utmost of feminine charm. They paid dearly for this admiration of European beauty. Tragic stories are told in the records of the hospitals to which the Russians were assigned.)

He says the German invasion was no surprise. Again and again the people had been told that war was inevitable. What astonished the peasants was that in spite of all preparations the Red Army fell back so soon before the invaders. They sneered at the Soviet warriors. "What was the good of all our sacrifices if they cannot hold the frontier!"

A good half of the White Russian peasantry did not obey the order to evacuate cattle, grain, agricultural machinery and their own persons at the advance of the foreign army. Pitched battles took place between the Soviet soldiers who attempted to carry out Stalin's order of total destruction before retreat and the peasants, who tried to save their possessions or what they thought would thenceforward be theirs—kolkhos property. Some soldiers did not execute the command to burn. They sympathized with the peasant. The latter thought first of his hearth, his barn and cattle. The Germans, sweeping forward, promised the speedy organization of a normal, happy life.

How and when did the peasants' attitude towards the Germans change?

Ivan is quite positive on this point.

The population of White Russia always included a large percentage of Jews, who lived for the most part in the cities. Immediately after their arrival, the Germans massacred the entire Jewish population of Minsk. The Jews were machine-gunned and thrown into common graves. The news spread rapidly and made a bad impression on the White Russians. Not that they had too great love for the Jews. There has always been some anti-semitism in the region. Under Soviet rule, the old anti-semitic feeling was

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further complicated by the hostility felt among the collectivized peasants towards the visiting city bureaucrat. (Ivan actually believes that in the USSR Jews enjoy more rights than other Russian citizens.) Left to themselves, the White Russian peasantry would have undoubtedly curtailed the civic rights of their Jewish compatriots, whom they frequently confused with Stalinist officialdom. But the massacre of tens of thousands of men, women and children—the entire Jewish population of Minsk—that was an unthinkable and evil thing. It was not at all compatible with the peasants' dream of an honorable and peaceful life on their regained land.

Ivan thinks that the great Minsk massacre could happen only because the Jews in that city did not imagine that such an act was possible. Many of them were small artisans and bourgeois. Their life was far from pleasant under the Soviet regime. Some of them may have even hoped for improvement of fortune under the Germans. Later the entire Jewish population would fly in panic at the first approach of the German army.

In time the invading troops began to pillage the villages. This came gradually. First personal effects were taken from known communists and kolkhos officials. Later orders were issued to the starosta (elder) of each village to deliver by this or that date so many heads of cattle, so many *puds* of grain, so many pigs, etc.

The Germans failed to make the least symbolic gesture of living up to their promises of returning the kolkhos lands to the peasants. The most credulous began to see through the Germans' game. White Russians who lived near railway lines saw huge quantities of agricultural produce loaded on trains for shipment to Germany. The occupying power had a ravenous appetite. The Germans tore sheepskins from the peasants' backs and *valenki* (felt boots) from their feet. The least show of resistance was punished with the gallows. Executions were public.

Now hanging was no longer in the tradition of contemporary Russia. It affected the people in a worse way than execution by shooting, which has become so customary a performance in the Soviet sixth of the globe. All hopes about the German "liberators" vanished. The season of nice promises was at end. Peasants fled to the forests to become guerrillas. They lived there in *zemlianki*, dugouts covered with tree branches. The "political" slogan of the guerrillas was "For the Russian people." It was not "For the Soviet regime," which would have been confused in the peasant's mind with Stalin's rule. Therefore, official Soviet propagandists avoided any mention of Stalin. They knew his name could not serve as a rallying cry among the peasants.

The people no longer doubted that the German had come as a pitiless conqueror. Nobody now hoped that German occupation would result in a better life for the common folk of Russia. The German looting and hangings had to be stopped. At any price, the Germans had to be chased out of Russia. Stalin and his army were waging war against the Germans. Then you had to fight together with Stalin. Instead of putting over their boasted crusade against Bolshevism, Hitler and his servants had, by their stupidity and cruelty, reenforced Stalin's power over the Russian people.

Ivan's opposition to Bolshevism is of a petty-bourgeois nature, at the stage of primitive accumulation. Ivan wants to be an owner of land. However, he is at the same time anti-capitalist. He finds it unjust for an individual to own land without working it himself. When, before the collectivization period, the Soviet authorities forbade the peasants to hire labor, Ivan approved. True, he says, it made matters difficult for the enterprising peasant, who could not get help for urgent, seasonal work. But according to Ivan's equalitarian outlook, this was a just measure. (One of the things he found especially amusing in France was hearing the bell in the dining room of the proprietor for whom he worked as an agricultural laborer. At first he thought it was the telephone. Great was his astonishment when he discovered it was his employer's wife ringing for the cook to bring dishes of food from the kitchen. He never says outright that he disapproves of this relation of mistress and servant, but you notice that he is irked by it.)

Our witness can hardly read and write. He cannot figure out a sum with pencil and paper. But he is quite good at a game of checkers. His knowledge of geography is extremely limited. That does not stop him from taking a lively interest in world events. Recently he asked me this question: "Why is it that in Russia they won't let the people benefit from their own land?" He sighed: "Think how happy we could be there working the land for ourselves!"

2.

Another civilian prisoner, Nikofor S., 24 years old, comes from the Ukraine. He was brought, with 2000 of his compatriots, to the Jersey and Guernsey Isles in 1942. (He told me only 200 of his group survive.)

He is very enthusiastic in his description of life in the kolkos. The collectivized peasants, he says, had everything. It is true there was a lack of clothing, and his mother told him that before collectivization, you were able to buy textiles freely. But such tales, he thinks, must be a vestige of the old folks' attachment to the rotten past. The aged people never stop talking about the fairy-tale past. As for him, he thought only of his fatherland. He said he admired his country, and believed its system was the best in the world.

Nikofor reads with difficulty, but he is interested in story books, especially novels of life in Soviet Russia. He has not yet quite mastered the art of penmanship. His Russian is mixed with Ukrainian, and he has little notion of the grammar of either language. Yet he is now busy noting down on paper a "novel" of his own experiences.

In the two conversations I had with Nikofor, he assured me that at the beginning of the war the Ukrainian peasants were eager to see the Germans come. They hoped the kolkhosi would be abolished. That sentiment, he said, was due to the influence of the sons and daughters of the dispossessed nobility who had infiltrated into the collectives. He said he did not remember the famine that swept the Ukraine at the start of the collectivization drive, though he recalls a "difficult year due to a bad harvest." All his memories of Soviet Russia are radiant. He seems quite sincere when he argues that all Russians living abroad ought to be forced to return to Russia so that they might enjoy there a very happy life.

3.

Nicholas K. is the son of a peasant in the Kishenev district. He was taken prisoner near Leningrad in 1943. He is an intelligent young man, and speaks good Russian as well as Ukrainian, the language in which he received his secondary-school education. He has some knowledge of

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Russian and world history and geography. He expresses himself very clearly.

He does not want to return to his native land. When I asked him why, he said he wanted to see other countries, especially the United States. (He was caught trying to board a ship bound for America.) He stated he was convinced that contrary to what "they" teach the people at home, it was the Russians who had the lowest standard of living in the world. He too was influenced by what he had heard about the luxurious Finnish homes, the Finns' clothing and furniture. He said he knew why the Finns defended themselves so bitterly against superior might of the Soviet Army. They were afraid to have their living standards brought down to those of the Russians. When I asked him how he explained the initial military successes of the Germans, he replied without hesitation that a majority of the rural population in the Ukraine welcomed the German invasion in the hope of having the kolkhosi done away with. If there was a change later, it was due to the atrocities committed by the Germans against the Ukrainians and Jews.

He blames the Soviet authorities not so much for installing agricultural collectives as for the brutality with which this collectivization was accomplished. "Take the case of my own people. My father worked on the land that was his after the 'distribution' (1917-1918). He had no one to help him. The children were too small. (Our witness was the oldest.) He had some cattle he himself had raised. He was no kulak. He was a worker who exploited no one." At the start of the collectivization drive, Nicholas' father categorically refused to enter a kolkhos. He did not want to be bossed around at his work, and he was a "believer."

"Are you a believer?" I asked him.

"I don't know if God exists," he answered. "At any rate, I prefer neither to pray to God nor to insult him."

His father was arrested and sent to labor in the construction of the White Sea-Baltic Canal. He returned three years later, but still refused to be collectivized. After Nicholas' father had been taken away for good, their home was plundered, and the mother and three children left for the city, where she took all kinds of jobs in order to feed her little ones. Our witness attended school, and was a good student. But he had to help his mother make a living. So he left school and began to work. Those years of misery left a deep mark on Nicholas. He is not ready to forgive.

4.

I found among the prisoners several industrial workers (individuals who were not born in the peasant environment). One was a locksmith from Moscow, 30 years old, big, quite intelligent. He had been taken prisoner in the Ukraine, while lying wounded in a hospital. (He had an enormous scab on his neck.) He was quite patriotic and at the same time very sarcastic in regards to the Soviet government. He had no illusions about the wellbeing of the Russian worker. He was convinced, however, that it was necessary to fight the Germans. Speaking about the latter and their manner of waging war, he made a rather acute observation. "When the weather was bad, they always took shelter, no matter where and when. We Russians were made to go out in the dirtiest weather. That is because we are *ishaki* (donkeys)." To this endurance and the custom of the command to slight the suffering of the Russian combatant, he imputed final Soviet victory.

5.

Another worker, an Armenian from the Caucasus, 36 years old, was a former sailor in the Soviet battle fleet. As a civilian, he worked several years in a factory on the Volga. When we first met, he immediately asked me a question on a subject that seemed to trouble him greatly. Was the Soviet alliance with the Americans very solid? Would it last long? The question was asked before the "landing."

He complained that the Russian government was the only one that did not take care of its soldiers who had fallen into enemy hands. The Russians were the only ones among all Allied prisoners who did not receive letters or packages, and they, he thought, ran the risk of being arrested when they returned to Russia. Their government considered them to be traitors who had to win their pardon once they were brought back home. (Also the Mscow worker appeared to be agitated over this question.)

The Armenian was a great lover of the cinema. He recalled enthusiastically the Chaplin film "Modern Times," which he had seen in Russia before the war. "It is a takeoff," he assured me, "on our Stakhanovism." He was quite hostile to the Soviet government, and seemed to be influenced by a kind of nationalist Caucasian opposition.

6.

We have then the very colorful person of Abdul Ch., a Tatar from the region of Simbirsk, 28 years old, a German prisoner since the close of 1941. He did his fighting in the Leningrad region, where he had lived since 1932, when at the age of 15, he left his native village to try his luck in the large city.

His father, like many others of his kind, was dispossessed in the great collectivization drive. Abdul nurses terrible memories of those years of misery. Before collectivization, his family was one of the numerous peasant households that had attained relative comfort by 1928. They owned a good cow, which yielded 15 litres of milk. They had a horse. Their house was large and clean. His father was a pious Muslim, and Abdul received a religious education. Later our friend lost his faith, but he never forgot his Mohammedan grandmother, whose memory helped to guide him through a life marked by ups and downs.

He was now working for the United States Army. He ate American food. He wore an American uniform. Like so many Europeans and Americans, he pilfered U.S. Army goods and sold them in the black market. He was thus enabled for several months to lead a full life, in which wine and women formed an important detail. With another Russian ex-prisoner, he attempted to board a ship bound for the United States. Unfortunately each traveler carried a fine leather-cased camera slung over his shoulder. That gave them away. They were stopped and held as spies. After some questioning, they were handed over to the Soviet authorities in France and kept locked up for twenty-five days. Afterwards, they were led to a station to be put on a train going to the USSR. However, our wanderer succeeded in making his getaway after leaving with his guards his watch, American uniform and shoes, and all the rest of the wealth he had accumulated. He did not want to return to Russia.

"Why don't you want to return to your native land?" I asked him.

He could not give me a clear answer. He talked about his life, and in his account the memory of his devastated

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home played an important part. Russia, he said, is a good country, but it is badly ruled. Like so many of his comrades, he thought that the misery and low standards of Russian life were the conscious creation of the Soviet government. The wages, clothing and food he got from the Americans had influenced him for good, so that he was psychologically unsuited to live and work again in Russia. After passing through so many countries, he came to the conclusion that nowhere do governments bother much about the needs of the little man and that common people are only cannon fodder. From then he refused to serve any government.

When I told him that the member of a kolkhos now had the right to own his horse, he answered smiling that this was a trick to get the peasants to work harder so they could be robbed later. He accused Stalin of treachery because in one of his speeches he described the Great Russians as the first of all the peoples in the Union. That, he said, was a betrayal of the principle of equality among peoples who were formerly friends. He asked me if it was true that in democratic countries any newspaper can attack the government. It was hard for him to believe this. Abdul, too, was worried about the rumor that former prisoners of war returned to the USSR were sent to do forced labor and they had to win a pardon. He said he preferred not to seek pardons in Russia. He was going to try his luck in the capitalist countries. He was confident he could make his way, and never abandoned his dream of going to America, the country of the "self-made" man.

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(b) The Workers

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The following report is by a French citizen who, in the aftermath of the war, found himself working in the Russian coal mines.*

It is interesting to note that his report is at once more optimistic and more pessimistic about the hold of the Stalin regime over the masses than is most material we read on the subject. Optimistic in that it shows how even the most complete totalitarian system in history has been unable to regiment people beyond a certain point: the Soviet miners complain and criticise openly, they sabotage production by Veblen's "conscientious withdrawal of efficiency," and—most startling revelation of all—the people have created their own free-market economy. Pessimistic in that our observer finds a fatalistic attitude toward the Soviet system: "They have neither the will nor the intelligence to conceive a change" and "You can say they lack a sense of liberty." Similarly, Dr. Belich imputes to her Russians "a petty and narrowly materialistic outlook of life." Thus while these reports show that human nature is not infinitely malleable even under the hammer of Stalinism, they also show that its resistance takes the form of evasion, and even a kind of adjustment or compromise, rather than of rebellion. Undoubtedly an important factor here is, as Dr. Belich notes, the economic deprivations and the ignorance imposed on the masses by the regime. This low cultural level, by the way, is in ironic contrast to the claims of American apologists for Stalinism. (On this, see also "500 Red Army Soldiers" in our October, 1945 issue.)

TRACES of the war are visible everywhere in the Ukraine. The most difficult problem is manpower. In Bessarabia and in the Odessa region, the government has resorted to mass mobilization of men and women. Rumanians, Yugoslavs, and Poles have been deported to the Donbass (Don Basin) to work in the mines. Together with them are German, Hungarian and Rumanian prisoners, and a small number of Italians. It is sad to say that the same lot fell to the "freed" Russian prisoners of war. They were also sent to work in the Don coal mines. They remain there under strict mobilization orders, unable to rejoin their families.

Still another category of reconstruction workers is provided by "collaborationists." Those are Soviet citizens who had been put into the German Army or had cooperated with the invader. Many of them have been condemned to forced labor in the coal mines. The sentences are from 10 to 20 years. A certain number of these convicts were paroled in September 1945, on the condition that they would stay in the Donbass and have their families come to live with them. Death sentences for collaboration with the enemy have been rare. The Soviet Union is too short of labor.

The Soviet Free Market—the "Bazaar"

Side by side with the official commerce carried on by the State, there exists now in Soviet Russia a kind of free commerce. It acquired considerable importance during the war. It is becoming more and more of a factor in Soviet life. This commerce does not take place in stores, but on the street. Each city and town has its market place, with booths for meat, bread, milk and fish. However, you can find on this market—commonly referred to as the *bazaar*—

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almost everything else: old clothing, sewing machines, electric bulbs, etc.

The bazaar is the center of town life. On his free day, the worker, man or woman, takes a trip to the town bazaar. This event takes on such great importance that they talk about it during the entire week. They ask you, with some pride: "Have you got as good a bazaar in your country?" It is hard for them to believe there are bigger and better "bazaars" in the West. The attraction that the free market exercises on the Soviet individual is of great significance. In it he finds himself face to face with a different world, one that obeys the law of economic liberty. In the bazaar one can sell and buy freely anything he wants. And everybody has something to sell. On his after-work patch of soil, a worker grows a bit of tobacco. His wife sells the tobacco in the bazaar. He economizes, buys himself a goat (1,200 rubles) or a cow (27,000 rubles) and sells his milk curd (5 rubles a glass). By the dint of shrewd merchandising, one of my fellow workers who grew and sold tobacco was enabled to buy himself a cow for 27,000 rubles.

Living Standards of the Donbass Miners

Compared with the living standard of the French miner, the Soviet miner's is quite low. The average wage of a worker accomplishing the usual prescribed norm is 600 to 800 rubles. A Stakhanovist, producing 210% of the norm, can earn as much as 5000 rubles. Lodging, even in recently constructed living quarters, is extremely primitive. There is no running water, no water closet. A family has the right to two rooms and a kitchen. The rent is 50 rubles a month. Even when the worker succeeds in getting enough food to keep going with the aid of his after-work "crops" and his business activity in the free market, he encounters great hardships in the matter of clothing. At Makieivka, workers I met going to work looked like beggars in rags.

None of the Makieivka mines I have visited had hygienic installations. There were no showers or toilets where you could wash up after work. In Mine No. 9 there was a bathroom for the engineers. I suppose you can expect improvement in the course of the reconstruction now in progress.

My fellow workers assured me they had enough food before the war. Things will undoubtedly improve two or three years from now and the Donbass workers will again be getting their vodka at 20 rubles a litre. Today the price in the State stores is 120 rubles a litre.

The Moral Condition of the Soviet Worker

Discussing things in the lamp room of mine No. 9, coal cutter B. remarked to me: "You will soon be going back to your own country. A new life will begin for you. But we. . . .!"

Young Nicholas laughed: "We? Why, we'll be sipping our chocolate again!"

There was a roar on all sides. B. shouted: "That's youth for you! Chocolate! That's all they need."

Another time I tried to explain to them what the Soviet Union meant to the workers of the world. "You don't seem to realize that you ought to love your country. The Soviet Union is known all over the world as the worker's paradise."

They laughed. They said I was trying to be funny, said they didn't know what to admire more—the cleverness of the people who fooled the workers of the world or the stupidity of the workers of the world. Till my last day at the mine, they kidded me about the "workers" world. Every time, we had reason to complain about some injustice or hardship on the job, they used to tell me: "Well, what do you expect? It's your paradise, isn't it?"

The fundamental difference between the worker in the capitalist countries and the Soviet worker, as I see it, is the following. The first expects a great deal from a revolution or from evolution. He sometimes dreams of winning power in society or he dreams of reforms that will bring about fundamental changes in his social situation. The Soviet worker has stopped hoping. He does not expect anything good from the future. Instead he broods with a kind of nostalgic feeling, on the past. He recalls the years of the NEP—Lenin's "New Economic Policy." He believes Lenin had given him liberty! This liberty was then taken away from the Russian worker, and there is no chance of winning it back. He, the worker, is the prisoner of a Soviet society. He is mobilized for life at his particular job. He cannot leave his job without incurring grave penalties. One of my fellow workers, a young fellow of eighteen, was sentenced to six years of prison because he stayed away three days from work.

I have been asked many times if the war experience of millions of Soviet soldiers, and the knowledge of the outside world gained by hundreds of thousands of Soviet citizens who had a chance to leave their country during the war, will not have a great influence on the evolution of the USSR.

I don't think this influence will be great.

It is true that peasants who return from Central Europe recall with envy the beautiful homes of the Czech and Austrian peasants. They don't hide their feelings in this regard. They tell you quite frankly they would like to get out of Russia. But they are also quite sure no fundamental change will ever occur in their own country. They have neither the will nor the intelligence to conceive such a change. On this point, complete fatalism is the rule.

Of course, the war has brought a certain number of superficial alterations: the toleration of religion, the dissolution of the Communist International, etc. The curious thing is that the peasants and workers attribute such changes to England. You hear them say that it was all due to "ukases" (edicts, orders) from London. Till about June 1945, the Ukrainian peasants expected any day the announcement of the official abolition of the kolhkoses (agricultural collectives). Workers I have talked to told me they had heard for sure that England had given an "order" to Moscow to abolish the Kolkhoses and to institute a "free life" (svobodnaya zhisn) in Russia.

Sabotage on the Job

In my opinion, Soviet society divides itself into two classes: workers and bosses. In the second group are all the privileged members of the regime—all the various kinds of *"natchalniks."* The latter are quite numerous. Their official function is to make the worker toil. They are the real strength of the Soviet regime. They have so much class solidarity and are so aware of their class interests that I think it is an illusion to expect any fundamental changes in the social or economic structure of the USSR.

In mine No. 9, there was practically one *natchalnik* for every twenty workers. The *natchalniks* were on the job in the morning to supervise the arrival of the miners, to draw up the men's lists, and to do their records. Then they—the *natchalniks*—went to the canteen or to a special room

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reserved for them. From eight to nine thirty, they had their breakfast. About ten, various kinds of inspectors arrived: the inspector of the Makieivka Trust in charge of ventilation control, etc., etc. Later, in company of their inspectors, the *natchalniks* returned to the building for another little snack. Their coming and going to and from the canteen usually transpired in a very jovial atmosphere. However, now and then, the inspectors raised hell with the *natchalniks*. In their turn, the latter took it out on the workers. But as soon as the *natchalniks'* backs were turned, the workers took it easy.

On the first day of my work in the lamp room, my immediate overseer, the *diessatnik*, (chief of a group of ten workers) Victor Siemionovich told me: "Listen, you, you've got to look busy when the *natchalnik* is around. It doesn't matter what you do, but look busy. As soon as he leaves, drop everything and take it easy. Mustn't kill yourself. Slow and easy does it, that's our law!"

Victor Siemionovich lived up to this law with remarkable fidelity. At eight in the morning he stole out of the lamp room, and went home. He did not return till about ten so that he could be around when the morning shift was relieved. Away from the job, he attended to his bees and trading. He wanted to make a lot of money. That was his big interest in life. Now and then the *natchalnik* made a scene. But that did not worry Victor Siemionovich. He knew too much. He said the *natchalnik* had once stolen kerosene and was concerned in the disappearance of a 200 litre can of benzine. So Victor Siemionovich used to say: "If that son of a—— doesn't stop annoying me, I'll denounce him!"

Sabotage in production is the Soviet worker's great revenge on the regime that holds him a prisoner. The government does everything it can to combat the slow-down. It offers bonuses for good output. That is Stakhanovism. The State-employer also carries on much propaganda against the "parasites"—the workers who refuse to wear themselves out on the job.

From what I have seen, neither method is very effective. Soviet productivity will always be inferior to capitalist productivity. Soviet industry will always need ten workers where in France and the United States two are sufficient.

"Free Life—That's Savagery"

"What is this 'free life'?" asked young Nicholas one day in the course of a discussion at which our *natchalnik* Vlas Paramonovich was present.

"Free life?" the *natchalnik* exclaimed. "That is the end of everything. It means you go anywhere you want. In short, it's savagery. The end of everything."

To young Russians, who have not known the NEP period, liberty does not mean much. You can say they lack the sense of liberty. It is different with people who remember the years 1924-1927. But even among them few have any aspiration to change their personal situation or their trade. The last is a very difficult thing in Soviet Russia. It is much easier for a laborer to rise to the rank of a *natchalnik* in his place of work than to change his trade. I knew a case of this kind in the lamp room where I worked. We had one fine worker who was not getting the wages he deserved. (That happens now and then.) He wanted to get away from the lamp room. He wanted to become a truck driver. He had passed all his examinations, and had already been promised a position in the garage of the trust that ran the mine. However, his immediate boss refused to let him leave. He finally got away from the lamp room—after a struggle lasting three months.

The Soviet worker is not free. His position is like that of a soldier who is in service for life. There is one department, however, in which he can satisfy his need of liberty, in spite of everything. In all Soviet society the lowly worker alone is permitted to grumble and talk to his heart's content.

He also remains impervious to all government propaganda, and, in his peculiar manner, judges quite freely events and public personalities. He has no confidence in the Soviet newspaper and radio. (For a small price you can have a radio installed in your home and that way get government programs and news bulletins.) But he always tries to read between the lines. Following his fantasy freely, he fashions for himself a queer, extremely pessimistic image of the world.

For hours he will discuss with his comrades the "coming war with the capitalist countries." He finds fault with his *natchalniks*. Sometimes he even talks back to the "partorg," the representative of the Communist Party in charge of propaganda in the workshop.

It is incorrect to speak of an atmosphere of terror in the USSR. Inside the kind of prison where the Soviet worker finds himself, one is free to grumble and especially free to do as little work as possible. Upon the rise of the street market, Stakhanovism lost much of its importance. Instead of tiring himself in an effort to get a better living by increasing his output, the Soviet worker prefers to make money doing "business" in his after-work hours.

(c) Interview with a Prisoner

AUTHOR'S NOTE: *Among the prisoners-of-war returned to Germany from the Soviet Union in a recent transport, there was Stefan G., a young German socialist who had served a year in a Nazi concentration camp, two years in the Wehrmacht on the Eastern front, and two years in Russian prisoner-of-war camps. I have spent several evenings with him, discussing his experiences. The following interview sums up his story.—M.J.L.*

What was the general structure and organization of the Russian prison camps?

The camps in which I spent my two-year stretch were all under the command of the NKVD. Power was held by a small corps of Russian officers who delegated their authorities to German assistants. They were all operated in strict military fashion, even to the divisions of regiments, battalions, and companies. The German camp commanders were, with very few exceptions, officers and sergeants of the Nazi Army. They were addressed by rank and saluted accordingly. Occasionally, men with character and a measure of humanity came into leading positions. Life then for the prisoners was tolerable. For the most part the Germans and the Russians managed to cooperate and run a camp which took on the worst features of a *Kazett* in the Third Reich. German PWs tried to make life for themselves as agreeable as possible, and this was possible only by cruelly exploiting their comrades and fawning before the Russian prison-commanders.

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Were you as a recognized anti-fascist and sympathizer with socialism able to play any special role in the camps?

Well, this was the situation in which I found myself. First, in order to do any kind of political work, re-education or otherwise, I had to buck to a certain extent military discipline. This no Wehrmacht officer would tolerate, and no Russian, curiously enough, could understand. Sometimes, when I did manage to get small discussion-groups together and we reviewed problems like "Prussian militarism" and "Nazi authoritarianism," I got Russian reprimands. Military discipline, the Russians explained to me, was a good thing, a very good thing. Authority should be respected. It was not correct to undermine either. How then could I possibly talk with these simple German soldiers still clinging to remnants of the Fascist ideology? Then again most of the ranks of our "anti-fascists" were divided among NKVD agents and old Nazis nicely camouflaging themselves. With these as our comrades almost nothing could be achieved.

Were there, then, no conflicts between the outer-Russian and the inner-German administrations?

Fewer than one would expect in the face of all the propaganda-cultivated hatred between Communists and Nazis, Russians and Germans. They had common interests and advantages in the prison-camps. The system held them together, and their organizational habits often coincided. One of my camps was run completely by former Nazi activists and SS-men. I doubt whether even Belsen or Dachau was a more typical product of the system. Beatings were regular, and sadistic forms of punishment, particularly in the severe winter weather, were an everyday thing. The Russian commanders knew all this, but nothing was ever done to change the situation. The Fascist leadership held the men strictly in line and kept them working under all conditions and hardships. This mattered. Then too they shared in the corrupt profits of the camp. Food and clothing were appropriated and then shared. I often saw them feasting together. I once confronted a German commander with the real situation. He replied cynically, "What do you want? Nothing can happen to us. If we fall then the Russians fall with us. We know too much. . . ." And they didn't fall. The only victims were the handful of real anti-fascists who from time to time would be liquidated. These were labeled as "saboteurs of the camp discipline and work program," and this the Russians found quite agreeable. They understood that sort of thing.

What about the work-program?

We worked in order to eat, we worked in order to live. And as workers in the USSR, provisions were made for us. The central regulations which came from Moscow allowed us our human requirements. But as they used to say in the old days, Russia is big and our Father the Czar is far away. We worked under the worst conditions, with the worst instruments, and under a completely corrupted labor-boss system. The figures were always changed, either to free part of the production for the local black-market, or to take part of our rations awarded for fulfilling the assigned quotas. This slowly but surely ruined the health of the men. Few after a year were capable of real work. There was mass-sickness in every camp. And then you have to add to that the spiritual depression. In the summer of 1946 contact was first allowed with families back in Germany. A few first transports carried sick PW's back home. The men knew so long as they were able to work they would never leave. Hundreds and thousands tried to ruin themselves. They sold their bread, refused to boil the water, put together all kinds of salt-and fish concoctions in order to get themselves sick. Physically and morally they became only shadows of their former selves.

How much could you see of industrial labor as a whole in Soviet Russia, and the work-habits and living conditions of the Russian working-class?

I had, relatively speaking, a good deal of personal freedom. I often used to visit nearby towns and cities to see whether I couldn't buy or barter or black-market a few things for the men. Often I had the opportunity to visit Russian plants to exchange tools or coordinate the work-programs. So far as I coud see the average Russian worker was as badly off as the German prisoner, if not worse. Certainly as a laborer he was even more unproductive than our sick unwilling slaves. Quality-of-work is apparently a non-existent factor in Soviet production. What counts is Quantity. Moscow sets a *Norm,* a quota. This, at the least, has to be fulfilled; more often than not it is "exceeded." For example, the masons, Russian or German, are supposed to do about 640 bricks on a smooth surface in an 8-hour day. If he does 700 the quota is exceeded. He is rewarded as a fine worker. Whether the wall is crooked interests nobody. So long as it remains standing, that's enough. (For how long, is not so important.) Around this principle the whole industrial system hangs. In one of our yards there was the job of unloading vast truck-loads of bricks for a new factory. A certain amount of time was allotted. We unloaded as quickly as we could consistent with careful stacking. When the time ran short the Russian foreman insisted on speed and directed that the bricks be thrown rather than carried from the trucks. Needless to say the yard was soon full of broken fragments. That this would never serve to rebuild the factory—well, that was somebody else's responsibility. And if anybody tried to offer a suggestion or a correction—well, that was the responsibility of the NKVD. This brick incident is the most ordinary of happenings. I saw reparations-deliveries with fine precision instruments dismantled in Germany and carefully packed handled in the same way. I saw housing projects almost wrecked by the refusal to remove the giant nearby trees until the paper-order from Moscow came. When the order came the houses were already up, but down the trees went, and with them a great many of the houses! This made its impression on the German workers. They were slaves, but, still, a man, when he has to work, likes to think that he's doing a job well. Under the circumstances it's a small pitiful satisfaction, but nevertheless something. The ambition and the efficiency soon were gone. In Russia, under its corrupt bureaucratic Statism, a good worker is an anomaly. Sooner or later he comes under the classification "saboteur." For the rest, I am afraid I can't report very much, because I am neither an engineer nor a skilled worker. But it did seem to me that no Soviet machine in a Soviet factory ever was in complete working order. Something was always wrong. A part was always missing. No plant seemed to have an intelligent system. The raw materials were too far away, or the finished products were coming out on the wrong end. Tools and instruments were

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shoddy and faulty. Fear and uncertainty watched over all small or large groups of Russians working together, and this made for an absurd tempo; I saw men waiting in line until the NKVD-guard returned to take them to the latrine in groups of three.

And what was the general moral and ideological condition of the Russians themselves? Are they already stupefied automatons or is there an undercurrent of unruliness and protest?

The average Russian, so far as I could feel and hear, is anti-Soviet. For most of us this was more than a little difficult to believe because of the patriotic ferocity with which most of the Russian soldiers fought. After two years in the USSR, one learned to make the distinction between the Russian love for his land and his hatred for the regime. None of us could help but feeling: what a political opportunity Hitler, Himmler, and Rosenberg threw away in the East! How easily they could have split the masses away from the Stalinist leadership! But the national cruelty inherent in Nazism made that impossible. The fanatical atrocities against the Russian people forced them to identify the Kremlin with their own cause. It was for this reason, I often suspected in conversations with Russians, that there was only one General Vlassov and only one renegade army, and that at the very outset of the war. Today, in peacetime, the distinction is clearly drawn. The worker knows what to expect from his political bosses. The soldier, especially if he has seen Warsaw or Berlin or Budapest or Vienna or any western urban scene, is untrustworthy. Literally hundreds of thousands of Russians would creep through forests at night if they could find asylum somewhere in the West out of reach of NKVD patrols. I can't say whether any of this opposition takes on a political character. One would have to be in the Party or in the trade-unions to be able to judge that. But this much I can report. The great bulk of the Russian bitterness among the masses works itself out in anti-Semitism. In Russia the anti-Semitism has become almost fanatical. Everywhere I went in contact with Russians I heard it. Every Jew in public Soviet office bore the brunt of the mass-opposition. By comparison the anti-Semitism which Hitler cultivated among the German people during the Third Reich is an isolated inconsequential prejudice. I may be suffering from shock but it seemed to me that everybody in the Soviet Union, with the exception of the Jews, was an anti-Semite. A dozen times I heard this type of remark —"That Hitler brought war to our land was not a good thing. But if he had at least wiped out the Jews, especially here in Russia, it wouldn't have been so bad. . . ." This, of course, was only said *unter vier augen,* in greatest privacy. Officially anti-Semitic sentiments are criminal, and nobody seems so uncorrupted that he wouldn't turn his Jew-hating brother over to the police for some petty advantage. And this is the terrible tendency of totalitarianism. It degenerates even its opposition, it taints every little human protest. In every field of Russian life there are only two alternatives—corruption or larceny. In order to live and to go on living you have to play ball with the machine or become a crook, an open thief. For this reason the new statutes in the Soviet Union are so fantastically harsh against petty-thievery. They are desperate measures to restore some kind of moral discipline to the Soviet society.

Finally, I should like to ask about the secret police—what were your experiences with the NKVD?

The secret police watches everybody and everything, and especially itself. The German PW's were systematically brought into the system of NKVD espionage, and their job was not merely to report on the other German PW's but also on the Soviet officers! Like the Russian agents, the German agents were of three varieties. First, the so-called *achtgroschenjungen,* characterless people who for some little profit would spy on and denounce anybody for any regime. Second, there were anti-fascist elements and they were used for all they were worth. They all swore to and signed an oath: "I pledge myself here in camp and elsewhere after my liberation to support with my entire strength and ability the struggle of the NKVD against Fascism and Fascists and Reaction. My duties and role are to be kept in utter secrecy and I hereby acknowledge that I have now placed myself under the jurisdiction of the law of the Soviet Army." Third, influential elements out of Nazi and SS circles who, willingly or unwillingly, were put into the service. In my own camps the percentage of NKVD agents varied from 5% to 10% of the inmates. They reported so-called "sabotage," conversations on all themes among the prisoners, important developments. An agent always had something to report. No news was evidence only of his own complicity! Most of the men identified NKVD agents with anti-fascists, and this for the most part was true. Communists and liberal-leftists of all kinds left this impression. It made any sort of anti-fascist democratic political work impossible. Most of the men, accordingly, are returning with their old anti-Bolshevik anti-Slav hatreds deepened, and most of the Third Reich prejudices intact. I remember one small discussion-group in which I tried to point out the fanatical inhumanity of the Hitler philosophy, especially with respect to the Jews. I knew what answer I would get, and I got it. "Hitler did not create anti-Semitism, and is not responsible for it. Look at these Russian anti-Hitlerites who hate the Jews as much as Goebbels did." Under the circumstances this was very difficult to answer. But there is one last thing I want to say and I think it is very important. Insofar as these men are anti-Soviet they are also anti-totalitarian. But their opposition is based on no principles, no set of values. They remain today in Stalin's camps, or in one of Germany's zones, as confused and ignorant as they were for the last 20 years. Given a slight change of circumstances, a small alteration of Moscow's programs, and they could all again become instruments of a ruthless dictatorship. This is clearly demonstrated by the Russo-German dictatorship in the Soviet zone of Germany. Stalin, like Hitler, is opposed by all kinds of people. But their systems can be opposed only by principled democrats.

As a final note I should like to add a voucher for Stefan G., for his responsibility and accuracy as an observer. His own journal and notebook, including a script of an anti-Nazi play which had won a Soviet prize, were all, unfortunately, confiscated by the Soviet police at the Soviet border before the transport was released westwards.

MELVIN J. LASKY

Berlin.

QUITE

A Correction: A headline in the N. Y. Times yesterday said "Paris Takes Steps to Quit Colonies." This was a typographical error. The word "quit" should have been "quiet."
—"N. Y. Times," April 4, 1947.

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4. Soviet Panslavism

WALTER KOLARZ

IN 1871 an anti-Darwinian Russian botanist, Danilevsky, published a book *Russia and Europe*. Until about ten years ago this book constituted no more than the literary evidence of a period in Russian history which was generally believed to be superseded. It embodied the dream of Slav supremacy in Eastern Europe and Russian supremacy within the Slav world. Danilevsky carried out an ideological revolution in his time: he threw overboard the pan-Slav romanticism of his predecessors and advocated a powerful militant pan-Slavism. He had a pitying smile for those "zealous friends of Slavism" who believed in a "league of slav souls and hearts." According to Danilevsky peaceful means to realize the pan-Slav idea were of no avail. As long as one tried to decide the issue by influencing public opinion, as long as the pan-Slav struggle was a struggle of words, Europe would be incomparably stronger, he said; Russia could not be victorious by confining herself to the use of intellect as weapon alone, because French, English and German literature exerted a greater influence on the non-Russian Slavs than Russian literature, and this would remain so until the day of pan-Slav action. Only open struggle—this was Danilevsky's conclusion—would unchain the mighty sympathies founded on racial unity and identity of religion.

Danilevsky's book was never reprinted in the Soviet Union, and even today nobody in Russia would dare to quote the author of the "bible of pan-Slavism" with approval. The new young Soviet generation hardly knows Danilevsky's name, but some of the ideas which he expressed are tremendously popular with this generation.

Danilevsky's conception of Eastern Europe is almost identical with that conception which the Soviet State has either succeeded in realizing or is at present trying to realize.

Danilevsky visualized a pan-Slav federation under Russian leadership in which only four of the projected members would be actually Slav; namely Russia (including Eastern Galicia, Northern Bukovina, Trans-Carpathian Ukraine and the Dobrudja), Yugoslavia (including Istria and Trieste), the lands of the Czechs and Slovaks, and Bulgaria. The non-Slav units to be included in Danilevsky's federation were Hungary, Rumania and Greece, as well as Constantinople with its European and Asiatic hinterland, or in one word—the Straits.

This whole program has been carried out by Soviet Russia, with the exception of Greece, on which a well coordinated pan-Slav campaign is focused, and Constantinople, for which the diplomatic struggle is likewise in progress. Certainly, the Soviet Union has put the program into practice not in the name of a romantic ideology but for very matter-of-fact considerations; the old ideology was, however, used also to make the new Russian supremacy more acceptable to the "minor Slavs."

Hatred as a Political Instrument

One of the main qualities inherent in pan-Slavism and in all "panideas" is hatred—how could it be otherwise, seeing that these ideas are always supposed to be put into practice at the expense of other peoples?

Pan-Slavism has given rise to many brands of hatred. Some pan-Slavs, particularly Czechs and Russian pan-Slavs of German origin, like Hildebrand, hated the Germans. Dostoievsky's pan-Slavism was mainly anti-Turkish because the Turks were the enemies of orthodox Christianity and could not be considered as equal human beings. Through his pan-Slavism Dostoievsky was anti-English, because the English in his view supported the Turks against the Slavs of the Balkans. Another favorite target of pan-Slav animosity are the Hungarians, who indeed for a long time united, most paradoxically, the role of oppressors of Slavs and that of champions of progress in the Danube basin. The pan-Slav poet Tyutchev described the Hungarians as "an Asiatic horde," which had erected its camps in the midst of European peoples, and asserted that no compromise was possible with them.

To-day this many-sided hatred is awake again. One may say that such hatred was the seed of Hitler, of Nazism and of German rule, and this is true to some extent; this explains at least the hatred which the Germans meet in the countries of Eastern Europe.

It cannot, however, condone the fact that this hatred makes no distinction between guilty and innocent, between Nazis and anti-Nazis, between fascist persecutors and their victims. Anti-German fury now affects such innocent victims as German-speaking Jews who have survived the horror camps; it goes to such extremes that it leads to a ban on Beethoven's music.

The "new Slav policy" born during the war out of the common struggle of Slav peoples against aggressors has long since gone over to the offensive and assumed in parts a brutal, primitive racial and linguistic character.

The Slovaks are waging an undeclared war against the Hungarian minority of Czechoslovakia. The Yugoslavs and Bulgars are dreaming of the partition of Northern Greece between the Slav brethren and have presented claims in this sense to the Peace Conference. The Yugoslav Macedonians, led by the former Comintern leader Dimitry Vlahov, are demanding "Ægean Macedonia" from Greece and the Bulgars, inspired by George Dimitrov, claim Eastern Thrace.

It is far from our intention to lay all the blame on the members of the Eastern or Slav bloc. The official Greeks too passionately hate their Albanian and Slav neighbors whom they consider as barbarian upstarts, whilst the Greek Communists, advocating reconciliation with the Slavs, concentrate their animosity on Turks and English. From the Turks the Greek Communists demand Western Thrace,

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so that the Greek border might extend to the very gates of Constantinople. It seems that this claim has nothing in common with genuine Greek national aspirations and is obviously intended to support the Russian diplomatic offensive in the Straits question.

The evil forces of nationalism, once unleashed, are difficult to put under control again. The Russians are unable to check national hatred even where they would like to do so, for instance between various branches of the "Slav family."

Divide and Rule

Russia once preached brotherhood among the peoples of Eastern Europe, a revolutionary brotherhood to which language and nationality were no obstacle. The Communist Parties of Eastern Europe, whatever their mistakes may have been in the past, were schools of this spirit of brotherhood. They were guided by the principle that there was no room for national hatred in their midst; and there were even instances of Communists belonging themselves to the "State nation" who went to prison for defending the rights of minorities. At the beginning the Communists had something of the traditional humanitarian spirit of true Socialism which taught its followers to defend the cause of justice even against one's own nation.

Both Soviet Russia and the Communist Parties have capitulated before the spirit of nationalist hatred; Russia more out of sober calculation, the Communist Parties out of ideological weakness and dependence upon Soviet official policy.

The "new line" is no longer co-operation between the peoples, but their isolation. It seems that two races can no longer co-exist within one State, one district, one town. They have to be separated, the victors obtaining the right to "transfer" the vanquished. This policy of national homogeneity which characterizes the Russian peace in Eastern Europe recalls on the one hand the mediæval policy of getting rid of religious dissenters, and on the other the migrations of barbarian nomads.

The Poles have to transplant millions of their people on the strength of special treaties with the Ukrainian, Lithuanian and Byelorussian Soviet Republics; Germans are expelled from the "regained Polist terrtiories" and the Sudetenland under the Potsdam agreement. And all this may be but a beginning, because nobody could refuse to apply this principle of national isolation elsewhere, after the acceptance of it by the Big Powers as a just solution of pending nationality problems.

There are exceptions, of course, but they are rare. Thus a reasonable minority regime with full respect for the cultural rights of the minority people has been extended by the Rumanian government to the Hungarians of Transylvania. It is only fair to say that this solution stands to the credit of Russian diplomacy, which forced the Rumanian central authorities to make far-reaching concessions to the Hungarians under the threat of perpetuating Russian military government in the areas concerned. The government of Petru Groza under Russian inspiration made a serious effort to create a better atmosphere between Hungarians and Rumanians, although it refused at the same time to make even the slightest territorial concession to Hungary. Russia was in an easier position to press for fairness in Transylvania, as both Rumania and Hungary are non-Slav and both fought against Russia in the War.

The new "federal democratic" Yugoslavia, too, boasts of being a "model state" regarding the treatment of its minorities. The small Hungarian and Albanian minorities at present enjoy indeed greater rights than they had in the Yugoslav kingdom of the interwar period, and to the rest of the country the policy of "Slav federalism" is applied. "Slav federalism" is a principle which Stalin recommended both to Yugoslavia and to Czechoslovakia. Slav federalism means that every Slav group which has a special national or even only tribal consciousness of its own should form a separate administrative and political unity. According to the official minutes of the meetings of the Moscow All-Slav Committee, it was never a "Yugoslav" who took the floor, but either a "Serb," or a "Croat," a "Slovene" or even a "Bosnian" a "Macedonian" or a "Montenegrin."

Theoretically "Slav federalism" excludes the inter-Slav conflicts of which Yugoslavia has been the scene for the last decades, but the question has to be asked how far this federalism is genuine and how far it is propaganda designed to make Yugoslavia more attractive for "unredeemed brethren" living in Istria-Trieste, Carinthia and Northern Greece. The splitting up of Yugoslavia into "federative units" enables Yugoslavia to present territorial claims more convincingly and to exploit local nationalism in diplomacy, just as Soviet Russia exploits Armenian, Georgian or Azerbaijani nationalism for the extension of her own territory. True federalism should enable the Croats, for instance, to solve their local problems in their own way and appoint people of their own choice. If, however, the "Croat Parliament" decided that Doctor Machek—the democratic Croat peasant leader living in exile in Paris—should return to his home country and join the Croat government, it is hardly likely that such a Parliament would survive a single day. "Slav federalism" carried to the utmost limit as in Yugoslavia also operates in the interest of Russia, for by this process of sub-division the small Slav nations, in comparison with the Great Russian nation, become even more insignificant than before.

East European Bloc

It appears to be a basic rule of Russian policy in Eastern Europe that Slav nations deserve to be trusted more than non-Slav peoples; because towards the Slavs Russian policy has an easier sentimental approach, which works best with the Bulgars and Serbs, is less effective with the Czechs and Slovaks and doubtful with the Poles. On the other hand, the Russians distrust the Hungarians because they have adapted themselves less to the new conditions in Eastern Europe than their neighbors, and they despise the Rumanians. A man like Vyshinsky, who is mainly responsible for the present political set-up in Rumania, is full of irony and sarcasm towards that country.

The aim of Russian policy is less a Slav than an East European bloc just as Danilevsky's Slav federation was not exclusively Slav. Although Russia wants to organize the whole of Eastern Europe, pan-Slavism will remain an

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ideology binding together the most important links of the Eastern chain.

"Organize" does not mean, however, that the Russians want to introduce a one hundred per cent Soviet system in the countries belonging to the "bloc"; but Russia wishes that the states of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe should carry out thorough reforms and that "reliable persons" should be put in the place of the former ruling cliques.

The Soviet attitude in this respect differs little from that of Tsarist Russia which likewise wanted to exercise overlordship over the Slav brothers without introducing every detail of Russian autocracy in Belgrade and Sofia.

This was, of course, different in Poland—the Vistula Provinces, as the country was then called—which was considered as an integral part of Russia. Soviet Russia still adopts outwardly the view expressed in a Russian propaganda book *Skobelev and the Slavonic Cause* written by a Russian lady, Mme. Novikova, in 1883, who said among other things:

"We prefer autocracy for ourselves; we are firmly convinced that it suits us better than the Western systems of government; but in the wide field of the Slavonic family all systems of government flourish. Brotherly unity is all we seek for. At the same time we are free to advise our young brethren as to the best form of government."

This was true indeed; in 1878 the Bulgarian Principality, for instance, was given a constitution by the Russians, while autocracy continued to be the system of government in Russia itself.

The Russian Communists sincerely believe that the internal regime of the "new democracies of Eastern Europe" is very different from the system of government as established in the USSR. One cannot deny that some differences do exist even if they are continuously and systematically narrowed down.

The "Front Policy"

The basic political institution in all countries concerned is the "National Front," which goes back to the French and Spanish "Popular Fronts" and particularly to the "French Front" which the French communist leader, Maurice Thorez, propagated as early as 1936. (He dropped this idea, however, when he met opposition from the socialist party.)

In the Balkans the "front" policy was first put into practice by George Dimitrov, founder of the Fatherland Front of Bulgaria which he directed first by remote control from Moscow.

The "front policy" went through several stages. In its beginnings the "front" was in most countries a genuine coalition including Communists, Agrarians and socialists as the principal partners. The Communists, however, took fake parties as well into the coalitions, with the help of which they confused the public, undermined the *bona fide* parties or ousted them altogether from the "front."

This brings us to the second stage, the annihilation of independent peasant parties. The elimination from the political scene of the parties of Julius Maniu in Rumania, of Nikola Petkov in Bulgaria, of Stanislaw Mikolajczyk in Poland, the disintegration of the Smallholder Party in Hungary practically amounted to the smashing of democracy altogether since the peasant parties constituted those political factors which would have emerged as the strongest single groups in free elections.

On the other hand the Communists in the small Eastern European countries endeavored to avoid the mistakes which the Russian Bolsheviks committed in the handling of the peasant problem. Instead of depriving the peasants of a political representation altogether, the Eastern European Communists assisted in the creation of special "peasant parties" which had no political individuality of their own. These near-Communist peasant parties are the National Peasant Party in Hungary, the Ploughmen's Front in Rumania, the government Agrarians in Bulgaria, etc.

The third stage consisted in eliminating the independent socialist parties and forcing them into a "United Workers' Party." Unlike the suppression of the agrarian parties, this part of the political process in Eastern Europe was not achieved by administrative coercion but by a double pressure from below and from above. The Communist-Socialist party merger particularly in Rumania and Hungary was due to both the terror exercised in the factories by Communists against their Socialist fellow-workers and by the influence which Communist agents obtained within the central committees of the Socialist parties.

This development in three stages transforming the "fronts" from coalitions into Communist party organizations is characteristic of the developments in most of the satellite countries.

Only Yugoslavia and Albania marched quicker than the others; their "fronts" were never anything else but facades for Communist party rule. In Albania there were only Communists and "non-party patriots" and in Yugoslavia the "front" contained no independent non-Communist forces after the end of 1945.

While Albania and Yugoslavia formed a vanguard on the road towards totalitarianism, Czechoslovakia was lagging behind until it caught up with the others by a single big jump in February 1948.

Even before the "jump" the Czech Communists occupied an impregnable position. Apart from their numerical strength and their political power, they benefited from

Marx on Panslavism

Panslavism is a movement which endeavors to undo what a thousand years of history have created. It cannot achieve its aim without sweeping Turkey, Hungary and half of Germany off the map of Europe. Should this result ever be accomplished, it can be made to last by no other means than the subjugation of Europe.

Panslavism has now transformed itself from an article of faith into a political program. By now, it is no longer only Russia but the whole Panslavist conspiracy which threatens to found its realm on the ruins of Europe. This leaves Europe only one alternative—subjugation through slavery or the lasting destruction of the center of slavery's offensive strength, Russia.

—*Karl Marx in the "Neu Oderzeitung," April* 1855; *as quoted in "Tribune" (London), April* 2, 1948.

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their posing as the most intransigent nationalistic party and as the champions of pan-Slav ideology.

The elimination of all non-Communist opposition inside and outside the "fronts" will not bring about any final political consolidation in the satellite countries. There are plenty of indications that the purges will shift to certain brands of Communists in imitation of the great purges in Russia directed against the rightwing opposition and the "Trotzkyites." The discipline within the Eastern European Communist parties, all of them mass parties with greatly inflated membership, is bound to become more rigid. The fight against "deviators" from the party line will soon be launched, particularly against former socialdemocrats in the new "United Workers Parties."

As a matter of fact the purge has already started in some countries. Its first victims were two old Balkan Bolsheviks, the Albanian minister for popular culture, Seyfullah Maleshova, and the leader of the Rumanian communists in the period of illegality, Lukreziu Petrascanu.

Fuhrer Into 'Vozhd'

The emergence of opposition forces within the communist movement of Eastern Europe is a likely and logical reaction against a primitive cult of personalities largely overshadowing the political machinery of the "fronts." The new leaders of Eastern Europe stand above any criticism: they are, according to the official propaganda, both national heroes and "teachers" of their nations.

There is, of course, first of all the Stalin cult common to all countries of Eastern Europe. In addition Jugoslavia, Albania and Bulgaria have produced local leaders of such dynamic power as to deprive laws, constitutions and political institutions of any real value.

These leaders—the Russian word *vozhd,* as Stalin is called by his people, would be a more appropriate expression—have indeed unparalleled records in their countries. Marshal Tito, Enver Hoxha of Albania and George Dimitrov in Bulgaria have swelled to mythical proportions in the eyes of even many of their non-Communist countrymen, but only one of them—Dimitrov—is an original personality, creating and not only imitating. Tito is only a copy of Stalin and his state a copy of the Soviet Union. Tito has copied both great things and small, the Stalinist Constitution of 1936 and the title of Marshal. He is not the only one to do so. The *vozhd* of Russia's Eastern satellite "Mongolian People's Republic"—Choilbasan—also became "Marshal" after Stalin had assumed this title. Enver Hoxha is a shadow of Tito, with the exception that there could be no "Marshal" in a country of one million inhabitants, but only a self-appointed "Colonel-General."

The other peoples of Eastern Europe have not joined in the cult of local *vozhds* to the same degree as the Yugoslavs, Bulgars and Albanians.

In Czechoslovakia the Communist leader Klement Gottwald is played up by the Czech Communists as the personification of a great leader. Harry Pollitt, when returning from the Congress of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, wrote in his pamphlet *Impressions in Czechoslovakia* that with the exception of ovations to Stalin in the Soviet Union he never saw any leader get such an ovation as Gottwald.

Won't You Walk Into My Parlor...?

Dictatorship is not the only road to socialism. Czechoslovakia alone is in a position to show the world how collective economy and individual liberty can be combined.

We believe in democracy. We practice democracy. We do not for a moment propose to deviate from such a course. There is not a word of truth in the assertion that the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia cannot operate with other parties and that sooner or later it must strive for dictatorship.

—Clement Gottwald, leader of the Czech Communist Party, in 1947; *as quoted in "Socialist Commentary" (London), April* 1948.

In Rumania the attempt at a *vozhd* cult failed because the leading Communists there like Bodnerash, Luka and Anna Pauker are more of the "grey eminence" than of the limelight type and Petru Groza, the formal head of the government and leader of the "National Democratic Front," is too weak a personality to inspire respect or admiration.

There is no *vozhd* in Hungary either, where the Communists are too unpopular to produce a chief commanding nation-wide sympathies and the Smallholder personalities too "moderate" to be championed by Communists, who are everywhere the main protagonists of *vozhdism.* . . .

The October Revolution did away with the corrupt Tsarist bureaucracy (*chinovniki*) and replaced it by a new type of "Soviet civil servant" (*sovetskie sluzhashchie*).

The "new democracies" of Eastern Europe, which had suffered greatly in the past from a super-abundance of bureaucrats, have retained, despite all purges, a great many high officials who have served under the old regimes or even, if they were servile enough to turn their coats a second time, under the Germans.

The Communist Parties, in their permanent campaign both for new members and for front supporters, have welcomed all alleged "repentant sinners" whether Rumanian "Iron Guard" financiers, managers of big Czech private enterprises, ex-commanders of the Croat "*Ustashi*" of quisling Pavelich and politicians and journalists who supported the regime of Marshal Pilsudski and Colonel Beck in Poland. . . .

The peoples of Eastern Europe, whose human dignity has suffered under the rule of the Russian Tsars, the Sultans of the Ottoman Empire, the tyranny of their own little despots and royal dictators, and under the heel of the Nazis, have not yet found their way out of the darkness of their history. There are many good and constructive efforts buried underneath the hunger for power displayed by the "fronts," and much idealistic endeavor for the creation of a better world within the fronts. These efforts cannot, however, lead to a genuine Socialism because they are intertwined with ideas which are the very opposite of Socialism. True Socialism is a Socialism for all peoples. It can never be linked up with the romantic racialist and nationalist conceptions of a "Greater Bulgaria," a "Greater

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Yugoslavia," a Polish state reaching the Oder, or a "Slav Czechoslovakia" without national minorities.

The partly enforced, partly voluntary, unilateral option for Russia of the small East European countries is regrettable not because it makes Russia more powerful and the West less influential in the Balkans and the Danube basin, but because these countries need the humanizing contact with the West. These countries, where police regimes have deep-rooted traditions, where tolerance is rare and human life cheap, need for their moral recovery patterns which will not confirm them in their negation of human rights and individual freedom for the benefit of totalitarian or semi-totalitarian states.

By their long sufferings the peoples of Eastern Europe have earned the right to be freed from the nightmare of fear and particularly the right to look fearlessly towards both the East and the West. Only if Western and Eastern influences are equally present among them can they be really independent without belonging to either an anti-Russian or an anti-Western "cordon sanitaire."

5. Empire or Free Union?

WALTER PADLEY

SOME months ago a Colonial speaker at a London meeting suggested, in the course of a criticism of British policy in the Crown Colonies, that the Labor Government should send a "Working Party" to Moscow to find out how Stalin had solved the national and colonial problem. The audience cheered, although the hall was not packed with Communists. This incident illustrates an attitude of mind which is widespread among Socialists—apologists and critics of the Stalin regime alike. During the war many articles were written to the thesis that, whereas the Colonial peoples of Western imperialism were struggling for freedom and declining to support the war against Germany-Italy-Japan, there was complete solidarity among the hundred-odd national groups of the U.S.S.R. inhabiting large parts of Asia as well as Europe. For example, "The Caucasus will not Revolt" ran the title of a *New Statesman* article in September 1941. But little publicity has been given to the post-war "disappearance" of so-called Autonomous Republics and the wholesale deportation of their populations on the score of "wartime treachery." And during the past year an influential Negro leader, George Padmore, published a book, *How Russia Transformed Her Colonial Empire,* which maintained that the Union Republics are in fact free to secede and to pursue their own foreign policies, while the various peoples are free to develop their own national cultures—in short, that Stalin has solved the national question. An atempt to assess the policy of the U.S.S.R. in relation to the national question is, therefore, overdue. The task is not easy because, in the words of Arthur Koestler, Soviet Asia is "the dark side of the moon" to Western observers.

Lenin and the National Question

The right of nations to self-determination was a Marxian tenet inherited by Lenin and the Bolsheviks. Although, following Marx, Lenin considered this right had to be subordinated to the needs of the proletarian revolution, he gave it a very special emphasis. For the astute tactician at the head of the Bolsheviks saw the national struggles of the subject peoples as an important factor in the disintegration of the Czarist empire. Both before and after the March revolution, therefore, the Bolsheviks made full use of the self-determination slogan. Immediately power was seized, a *Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia* was issued over the name of Lenin and Stalin (the latter as Commissar for Nationalities). Its preamble opened by declaring that "The October Revolution of the workers and peasants began under the common banner of Emancipation," and it went on to affirm "the policy of a voluntary and honest union of the peoples of Russia." The Declaration ended by defining the principles which were to govern the solution of the national question:

"1. The equality and sovereignty of the peoples of Russia.
"2. The right of the peoples of Russia to free self-determination, even to the point of separation and the formation of an independent state.
"3. The abolition of any and all national and national-religious privileges and disabilities.
"4. The free development of national minorities and ethnographic groups inhabiting the territory of Russia."[1]

The Central Rada at Kiev immediately declared the Ukraine an independent Republic, Finland followed suit, and independent "governments" sprang up as far apart as Siberia and the Caucasus. "Self-determination" naturally became the cry of the bourgeois opponents of the Revolution in those territories, because it was calculated to carry mass support as indeed it often did. In the revolutionary wars first against the Germans and later against Allied intervention these "independent Governments" were often allied with the enemies of the Soviet State. During this period the general policy of the Bolsheviks was in accordance with the principle of self-determination.

It has been argued that even in 1917-21 the Bolsheviks abrogated their principle where military considerations demanded it. The revolutionary wars in the Southern and

1 John Reed, *Ten Days that Shook the World, p.* 219.

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Baltic lands have been depicted as a continuation of the historic thrust by Russia to warm water ports. Certainly, in the circumstances obtaining in 1917-21, the Marxist-Leninist doctrine of subordinating national struggle to the needs of the proletarian revolution could be used to justify almost anything. If one sorts out the tangle of revolutionary wars, counter-revolutionary wars and national struggles, there appear to be two cases where the principle may have been abrogated. First, Poland: where a defensive war was in the Summer of 1920 transformed into a war of the "revolutionary offensive," Tukhachevsky reaching the gates of Warsaw. This policy was carried out in spite of warnings from Rosa Luxemburg's comrades of the Polish Party, including Radek and Marchlewski, who were most doubtful whether the Polish workers would respond to revolutionary appeals. Trotsky, then Commissar for War, tells us in his autobiography that Marchlewski's warnings were responsible for his desire to get out of the war as quickly as possible, while Clara Zetkin relates that Lenin called Radek to him when the Poles did not revolt, admitting that he (Radek) had been right. If it were not for the second case, Georgia, it would be possible to dismiss the "revolutionary offensive" in Poland as simply an error of judgment. Despite all the attempts to whitewash and explain the forcible subjection of Georgia, it remains a clear violation of the right to self-determination. Georgian independence had been proclaimed in 1918, and in 1919 the Constituent Assembly formally approved an Act of Independence, the Social Democrats (Mensheviks) having an overwhelming majority.[2] It was invaded by the Bolsheviks and forcibly subjected. Stalin, himself a Georgian, and Dzerzhinsky, suppressed all opposition with great brutality and in 1921 they were bitterly criticized by Lenin, who called Stalin "a Great Russian Chauvinist." Lenin's opposition to Stalin's *practice* in the national question, led to the counter-charge by Stalin that Lenin was advocating "national liberalism."

The 1937 Purges

In the early days there was far-reaching autonomy, political as well as cultural, for the Ukraine, White Russia, etc. After December 1922, when the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was officially formed, centralization increased. The impetus came from the tasks of economic reconstruction, and it gathered momentum after the launching of the first Five Year Plan in 1928. But in the late 'twenties and the early 'thirties centralization went much further than economic matters required, and the theoretical autonomy, as well as the right to secession, of the Republics amounted to practically nothing. Power throughout the U.S.S.R. lay in Moscow and the instruments of that power were the Communist Party and the Secret Police, both dominated by Stalin and his group. The Governments of the Republics were on many occasions purged, reshuffled and replaced by central decisions at Moscow. In the early 'thirties agitation for greater autonomy in the Ukraine, White Russia and the Caucasus was suppressed as were similar aspirations in the Asiatic Republics in the late 'thirties. Indeed, the advocacy of secession, the right to which is formally guaranteed by Lenin's Declaration and the Stalin Constitution of 1936, came to be regarded as treason to the Soviet State. In 1937 alone the following were purged:[3]

Presidents	*Republic*
Cherviakov	White Russia
Rahkhimbayev	Tadjikistan
Arkupov	Karelian
Shotemur	Tadjikistan
Lordkipanide	Adjar
Dolgat	Daghestan
Kunz	Volga-German

Prime Ministers	*Republic*
Goloded	White Russia
Mgaloblishvili	Georgia
Khodjaev	Uzbekistan
Rakhinov	Tadjikistan
Bondarenko	Ukraine
Ovakbelashvili	Transcaucasia

There were countless other victims who occupied leading administrative positions in the Republics. It is not possible to trace the fate of all of them, but many were executed and the charges often included the promotion of secessionist movements. Typical entries in the "Diary of the Purge" were:

4.10.37 *Tulbass: Four executed for sabotage. Lordkipanide (President), Ramshivilli (Vice-President), and six other leaders of Adjar Republic executed; three others imprisoned.*

17.11.37 *Ukraine: Premier Bondarenzo arrested. Treason.*

7.12.37 *Georgia: Nine people on trial for plotting to establish capitalist government in Georgia under protection of a foreign power.*

31.12.37 *Erivan: Eight people, including Mamikorian, Katantaryan and Engibaryan, executed for plotting to establish capitalist government in Armenia under protection of foreign power.*

During the 1936-1938 purges, the Korean population around Vladivostok, numbering about half a million, were deported to Kazakstan and Uzbekistan in Central Asia. Official reason: Japanese agents were at work among the Koreans.

It is arguable that the purge affected all parts of Russia and that it was even directed and carried through by men who sometimes came from the non-Russian Republics. But this does not explain why the victims in the so-called Autonomous Republics were often charged with fostering secessionist movements, and sometimes with seeking the re-establishment of capitalism under the protection of foreign powers, and why in literary and cultural purges, artists from the Republics were usually denounced as "bourgeois nationalists." Here we cannot deal with the significance of the Moscow Trials and the Purges. But nothing written here implies acceptance of the charges against the "Old

2 The elections had given the Mensheviks 640,000 votes to 24,000 for the Bolsheviks.

3 See *Controversy*, March 1938, an open forum in which prominent Stalinists were still writing. Only one error was found in a lengthy list of victims of the purge in 1937.

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Bolsheviks," though it is certain that there was widespread opposition to the Stalin Government, which in the "Autonomous Republics" often took the form of "nationalist deviations."

Economic and Social Factors

Let us now turn to industrialization and education, which it is claimed show clearly the Soviet break with Czarist policies. A good deal of the propaganda material on this point is based on superficial parallels between the Czarist Empire and Western imperialisms in which the economic development of the Colonies is retarded in the interests of metropolitan industry. Yet in 1913, the Southern part of the Russian Empire—i.e., mainly the Ukraine-Caucasus-Caspian area—produced 87 per cent of its coal, 97 per cent of its oil and 73 per cent of its pig-iron.

Since the revolution these areas have retained their premier industrial position in coal, iron and oil, their output rising steeply though their *proportion* of total production has fallen as industry in the Central Region and the Urals, and to a much smaller extent the East, has expanded.

Military factors, of course, entered into the tendency to shift some industry eastwards and this is even truer of the new Five Year Plan of which the *Economist* (July 6/45) has written:

"Finally, in the location of industry the emphasis has been laid on the development of the eastern lands, partly at the expense of the rehabilitation of the liberated areas. . . . The centres to which the restriction applies (with the exception of Sverdlovsk in the Urals) are in fact the main industrial centres of European Russia. The restriction is politically perhaps the most sensational feature of the new Plan. It shows that the shift eastwards in Russia's industrial life is planned to continue almost at any price. The underlying motive is certainly the desire to achieve—for defensive purposes—as radical a dispersal of industry as possible. The plan does not say which new areas and cities are to be favored in industrial expansion. The shadow of the atomic bomb is visibly falling across Russia's new economic geography."

This industrial expansion throughout the U.S.S.R. is a remarkable feat. What is usually ignored is the relationship of this achievement to many of the features of Soviet life which are abhorrent to Western Socialists.

It partly, but certainly not wholly, explains the Draconic labor code—involving not only industrial conscription but also penalties for lateness, absenteeism and "indiscipline" undreamed of in Britain even in the midst of war—which developed in peace-time from 1930 onwards and which culminated in decrees dated June 26th and July 24th, 1940. A labor code involving the withdrawal of ration cards, the right to dwelling space and punishment by forced labor for what in Britain would be regarded as trivial offences may begin to make sense, even to the most inveterate "true-believer" among Western Russophiles, when applied to industrial labor transferred compulsorily from the older industrial areas to eastern districts thousands of miles away. Moreover, the mass forced-labor battalions, totalling millions of persons, which are officially admitted to have built the White Sea Canal and (in part) the Turkish-Siberian Railway, must be regarded as well-nigh indispensable to this industrial expansion in Central Asia and the East. Similarly, the Home Passport system introduced on December 27th, 1932, under which free travel is impossible for U.S.S.R. citizens, and absence from home even for 24 hours must be reported to the police, has a special significance in relation to the industrialization of areas inhabited by deportees from the West and by primitive peoples of nomadic habits. This, of course, is not the idyllic picture of the industrialization of backward territories drawn both by the apologists of the regime and by Negro leaders who ask that Stalin's Russia be regarded as a model for the liquidation of British imperialism. But it is derived from the facts.[4]

Moreover, it is a reasonable deduction that the income differentiation betwen the top layers of Soviet society and the workers and peasants, very great in European Russia, is even greater in the East—let us remember that the first rouble millionaire who came to light was a state farm director in Central Asia, Berdyebekov in Kazakhstan, and that often the higher income groups will be drawn from administrators, stakhanovites, etc. in the West. Who can

4 Cf. Koestler's *The Yogi and the Commissar* (part 3), and the Russia Today Society's reply: *The Philosophy of Betrayal*, by Lewis and Bishop.

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guess the detailed picture which a searchlight on "the dark side of the moon" would reveal?

Side by side with industrialization, there has taken place a rapid growth of literacy in the remote regions as well as in the West. And even if the near-unanimous Press reports, describing the Eastern Soviet armies which arrived in Central Europe in 1945, lead one to doubt the propaganda pictures of cultural and educational development, there is no reason to question great advances compared with Czarist times. Industrialization and a growth of literacy invariably accompany one another.

In cultural affairs, there has been less "Russification" than in Czarist days, though to talk of "cultural freedom" is plain nonsense, and even the phrase "cultural autonomy" is certainly a gross exaggeration. Russian, as a second language, is a compulsory subject in the schools. This has met with opposition even in comparatively recent times. *Izvestia* (Oct. 9th, 1937) at the time of the great purge complained that "the bourgeois nationalists who formerly held sway in the organs of public instruction did everything they could to hamper the teaching of Russian in non-Russian Schools," a remark obviously directed at the leading personnel in most of the "Autonomous Republics" who had been in office prior to the purge of 1936-7. In 1939 the Russian alphabet was universally introduced, a step which had been eschewed in the earlier days in order to avoid the charge of "Russification."[5] There are obvious advantages in having both a single alphabet and a common second language. But before denouncing resistance to them as simply the fad of a few cranks let us stop to consider what the reaction of subject peoples in other Empires would be if similar proposals were made by the metropolitan governments.

Cultural development has been permitted, even encouraged, among the non-Russian peoples so long as it conformed to the latest variant of the Party line. But in the frequent purges of writers, artists and musicians "bourgeois nationalism" has been a frequent offense. Here the verdict must be: progress yes, but freedom, or real autonomy, no.

In concluding our survey of the period 1917-41, special mention must be made of the Jewish question. Under Czardom, the Jews were the worst treated of all the minorities, subject to tyrannous restrictions and victims of the ill-famed pogroms. Anti-Semitism is illegal in the U.S.S.R. and from the earliest times Jews have been prominent in its public life. And even if one agrees with Victor Gollancz in opposing a similar law in Britain, there has been a complete break with Czarist persecution, deserving of full credit. It is true that in the purges Jews tended to suffer more than other groups, not because they were Jews, but because many Jews were tradesmen, while those in the revolutionary movement were frequently internationalists who came into conflict with Stalin's policies.

The War and After

This section begins with the invasion of Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Esthonia and the war with Finland—all territories formerly incorporated in the Czarist Empire. It is possible to argue that all these actions were governed only by military strategy. But both Russian leaders and Russophiles in Britain have claimed that the fact that these areas were once in the Russian Empire justified Stalin's actions. What are the facts which are relevant to our enquiry? First, there was mass resistance among the Polish and Finnish workers and peasants to Russian domination. Second, the Baltic Republics were annexed by force in 1940. Since the Red Army and the secret police were in occupation no credence can be given to referendum figures. This is proved by the mass deportations carried through by the Russian Government, which aimed at removing the potential leaders of all opposition. The decree for Lithuania (Nov. 28/40) defines 14 categories, ranging from the members of *all* non-communist political parties to clergymen and capitalists. Certainly hundreds of thousands, and probably several millions of persons from the Baltic lands were thus removed to Central Asia and the East.

During the war, news about the national aspect of the U.S.S.R. was largely replaced by a flood of propaganda articles emphasizing the strength of the "multi-national" state which had solved the national question. Moreover, in February, 1944, prominence was given to the decision which on paper gave further wide powers to the 16 Union Republics, including the right to enter into relations with foreign countries and to make treaties. The true significance of this move is already evident in the speeches and actions of the Ukrainian and White Russian delegates at U.N.O. But even while the war was on there were indications that all was not well among the non-Russian peoples. First, the deportation of the population of the Volga German Republic, totalling about 700,000, took place in 1941 when the Nazi armies were advancing. This was excused on grounds of military necessity. In 1944, when the Germans were driven out the "Autonomous Republic" of Kalmuk was abolished: the Kalmuks, a Mongol people descended from the Tartars of Khan Mamai, were punished for disloyalty to the Soviet regime. During the war, Great Russian nationalism and Pan-Slavism raised their heads. Russian history was rediscovered and Peter the Great, Ivan the Terrible, and others were made into national heroes. In the West this was considered mainly from a general ideological standpoint. It was regarded as a continuance of the development of a "Soviet patriotism" before the war, expressed in the changing of the Red Army oath of allegiance and in the substitution of a "national anthem" for the *Internationale*. The emergence of Great Russian patriotism revealed that Soviet patriotism was not enough and needed reinforcement. But the new heroes were, of course, the enslavers of the subject peoples, and tributes, for example, to Donskoy for his victory over Khan Mamai are not likely to please the Tartars.

5 Editor's Note: This had also an anti-Western significance, since the Russian (Kyrillic) alphabet, instead of the more convenient and widely used (in Europe and America) Roman alphabet, was the one chosen as the standard throughout Russia. Lenin, too, had planned some day to introduce a standard script and alphabet throughout Russia, but it was to have been the Roman, not the Kyrillic. Thus the 1939 decision was an early symptom of that break with Western culture which has produced the current cultural purge.

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In 1944 the other side of this appeared.

(1) In July 1944, the Tartar C.P. was chastized by Moscow for tolerating "serious shortcomings and mistakes of a nationalist character," and specifically the teaching of Tartar history was attacked, because the Golden Horde was depicted as a progressive State. It was also condemned for praising Khan Idegi and for not emphasizing the joint struggles for Tartars and their Russian oppressors against external enemies.

(2) In January 1945, historical and literary works in the Bashkir language were attacked by Moscow for nationalist deviations.

(3) In March 1945, the *History of the Kazakhstan Soviet Republic* came under the hammer. This was the first attempt to write a history of an Eastern Republic. Kazakhstan is the largest national republic of Soviet Asia and this history was a collective work of its scholars. It was denounced in *Bolshevik,* the leading theoretical organ of the U.S.S.R., for "nationalist deviations," and specifically for not recognizing that conquest by Czarist Russia was progressive in that it was the means to national unity.

Further significant news came after the end of the war in the Summer and Autumn of 1946. It was announced that the "Autonomous Republics" of Crimea and Chechau-Ingush had been abolished and their populations, totalling about 1½ million, deported to other parts of Russia. The announcement stated that "wartime treachery" was the reason. The capital of Chechau-Ingush is Groznyi, with 200,000 inhabitants, the second most important oil centre in the U.S.S.R., while the Crimean capital, Kerch, is an important metallurgical centre. Two British comments are worth quoting. The *Economist* wrote: "These new deportations have affected one-and-a-half million people. They have been officially explained as a punishment of the Chechens and Tartars for their collaboration with the Nazi invaders, but it is only too probable that this was not the only reason. The deportees will undoubtedly help to overcome the labor shortage in those unspecified 'other districts of the Soviet Union'." *Whitehall News* wrote: " . . . the legend of the complete unity of the nations of the Soviet Union should be reconsidered. It seems that Stalin was right when, in his speech to the Red Army Generals, he emphasized that victory had been won primarily by the effort of the Russians (53 per cent of the total population of the U.S.S.R.)." Almost simultaneously came an announcement by M. Krushtchen, the Chairman of the Ukrainian Council of Ministers, that in the eighteen months prior to August 1946 half the leading personalities of the Ukrainian Communist Party had to be expelled for deviations from the Party line.

These events, particularly the punishment of the Crimeans and Chechens, for wartime treachery, by forcible transference, must be read in the light of earlier reports that a considerable army of U.S.S.R. citizens fought under the Russian General Vlassov with the German forces. German propaganda was directed mainly to the non-Russian peoples and it was able to enlist support not only in the areas annexed in 1939-40—the Baltic Republics and Western Ukraine—but also among the Crimean Tartars, Kalmuks, Chechens and other peoples in the Ukraine-Caucasus area. Vlassov's army has sometimes been estimated at about a million and, considered militarily reliable, it is reported to have played a major part in critical battles such as Velikiye Luki in January 1943.

What would British Socialists say if Australia and New Zealand were wiped out by Whitehall decree and their populations transferred to Central Africa? Or if the population of Bengal was uprooted and transported because Subhas Bose's Indian National Army fought with the Japanese? The Left of British politics would have been marching to Trafalgar Square, denouncing it as a monstrous crime. I am not supporting the U.S.S.R. citizens who fought with the Germans any more than Bose's followers who fought with Japan in the Indian National Army. But Socialists must recognize that throughout history subject peoples have allied themselves with the enemies of their enemies and that they will continue to do so.

A Totalitarian Empire

To what conclusions does the above analysis lead? After due weight has been given to the positive achievements of the U.S.S.R., to industrial development, the spread of literacy and the ending of pogroms against the Jews and similar crimes, it must be stated categorically that the U.S.S.R. is not the "Free Union" of peoples which was Lenin's aim, and that after recent events it is stark fantasy to claim that Stalin has solved the national question. So long as national republics are created by annexation and destroyed by the forcible deportation of entire populations at the dictate of Moscow neither freedom nor autonomy can be said to exist. Nor can the events described above be dismissed as a temporary distortion provoked by war and the Hitler invasion. For a continuing development can be perceived from the time of Stalin's subjugation of his native Georgia by the methods of a "Great Russian Chauvinist."

If the U.S.S.R. is not a "Free Union," must it be described as an Empire? The answer to that question is largely a matter of terminology. The official Communist denial runs thus: imperialism is the last stage of capitalism; capitalism has been abolished in the U.S.S.R.; therefore the U.S.S.R. is not an Empire. But Lenin's book, *Imperialism,* clearly recognizes that imperialism pre-dated capitalism and it makes specific mention of the Roman Empire. Current Communist sophistry is, therefore, as remote from Leninist theory as Stalin's practice is remote from the original aim of a "Free Union." And if the treatment of the Crimeans, Chechens, Volga Germans and Kalmuks, the re-conquest of the old Czarist Empire by force, and the annexation of a strip of German territory on the Baltic are not imperialistic, then what are they? And Stalin's speech on May 24th, 1945, in which he said that the *Russian* nation was "the most outstanding of all the nations of the Soviet Union' and as such the "directing force of the Soviet Union," adding that it was the confidence of the *Russian* nation in the Soviet Government which ensured the victory over fascism—was that imbued with the imperialistic spirit? If the derivation of words is to govern their use, then the U.S.S.R. is both a totalitarian state and an empire.

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Finally, it may well be, though I am unable to affirm this with the certitude of some writers, that the historian of the future will see the totalitarian regime now existing in the U.S.S.R. as an indispensable instrument in a progressive transformation of that Czarist Empire, which in "the totality of its traits" Luxemburg and Lenin saw as an "Asiatic Despotism." And the present policy of mass deportations and mass migrations, if continued despite the monstrous inhumanities involved, may one day end in solving the national question by leaving no recognizable national entities. But whatever may be the case in the U.S.S.R., these policies are neither necessary nor progressive in Europe and involve a denial of the values of democratic Socialism. Indeed, the downright victory of democratic Socialism in Europe is the essential condition of the tentative historical evaluation hazarded above. Equally, the U.S.S.R. provides no model for the liquidation of West European imperialism, though some of the Colonial leaders, looking around a world made into a desert for their peoples by capitalist imperialism, have ben deceived by a mirage over the Russian Steppes. National freedom is an aspect of human freedom, and in striving resolutely against West European imperialism, democratic Socialists must not fall victims to another tyranny over men and women.

In the Spring Issue

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Gambier, Ohio **The Kenyon Review**

6. The Varga Episode

THE recent excommunication of the Comintern's leading economist Eugen Varga, as reported in the *New York Times* for January 25, 1948, does not seem to have as yet received the serious consideration that it deserves. Its implications far transcend the individual case.

What crimes has Varga been accused of? In a book published early in 1946—a monumental work utilizing a huge mass of factual data—Varga asserted among other things that there is no likelihood of a basic economic crisis in Western capitalism during the first ten post-war years, and that the basic contradictions of capitalism will not reappear until during the decade following 1955. He also stated that the experience of the war economies of the Western allies shows that the democratic capitalist State can engage in effective planning in the interest of the economy as a whole, that the State can act as a regulator of the national economy to which the monopolies and trusts are subordinated. The State can, in short, bring about the subordination of the profit motive to the national economic interest. Varga further made it clear that he didn't consider the Western capitalist states simple creatures of monopolies and trusts, and pointed to the fact that the living standards of American workers were maintained, even increased, during the war, and that the Labor Government of Britain had adopted far-reaching legislation in the national interest overriding and opposing the interest of the capitalist class.

Varga's book, published shortly after the end of the war, was circulated for about a year as an All-Union Communist Party document for the use of leading party members. But in the meantime the foreign line of Stalin's Empire was changed again. While it had formerly been oriented toward the achievement of some sort of uneasy and temporary compromise with the West, the line now veered toward the "left," and a huge offensive against the West, extending from foreign policies to cultural matters, was started. Suddenly it became essential to present the capitalist countries of the West as staggering on the brink of disaster, threatened by imminent political crisis and deepgoing depression. Varga accordingly was summoned before a Star Chamber composed of 20 leading economists and condemned for his errors. Apparently he refused, however, to recant—a most surprising development for those who know that Varga's career up to now was not marked by an excessive degree of steadfastness and moral courage. Said he: "You cannot oversimplify the problem. There has never existed a single group of capitalists constituting a financial oligarchy who direct the entire politics of the bourgeoisie."

On September 15, 1947, the Moscow *Bolshevik,* organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, published a review of Varga's book by one Gladkov not only attacking Varga for his errors but also threatening all those who had shown some sign of at least partially accepting his conclusions. Since then Varga has been in disgrace. He has been stripped of his post as director of the Institute of World Economics, and the Institute itself has been abolished.

It seems evident that many, if not all of Varga's statements are fully in accord with the findings of almost all

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economic experts both here and abroad. Whether one accepts his theory of the ten-year's period of economic stability or whether one thinks that the period will be shorter is not to the point. What is essential, however, is his correct forecast that American capitalism would not enter a cyclical crisis immediately after the end of the war but would, on the contrary, be in for a period of tremendous prosperity. Above all, Varga recognized that the simple vulgar-marxist scheme of the State as being simply the executive organ of the ruling class does not at all agree with present-day facts and that the period in which we live is characterized by an increasing tendency of the State to become independent of its class roots. It is clear from the *Times* outline of Varga's book that what is attempted here is the development of a theory of what economists have called "planned" or "controlled" economy. All facts that an unprejudiced economist can observe all over the world today would seem to confirm the existence of a strong trend in this direction.

* * *

The Varga case inspires the following speculations:

The Politburo cannot allow such theories to gain a hearing in Russia. If the "class state" can plan also, if Russia's totalitarian setup has no monopoly on planning, they lose their chief weapon in the ideological struggle both at home and abroad. Moreover, if the class state can plan, might it not be asked whether the Russian state, though it plans, is a class state? Furthermore, as stated above, since the whole propaganda machine is now geared to predict economic disaster for the United States, a theory based on facts which point to the contrary is naturally most unwelcome. The rulers of Russia *had* to suppress this most heretical book, and it is expected that its author will soon disappear completely from official life, if not from life altogether.

Yet the question arises: if the Politburo condemns Varga for a theory which is clearly in accord with the facts while it propagates one which belongs in the realm of mythical wish-dreaming, how does this react on the thinking of the ruling group itself? Are not the totalitarian propagandists caught in the net of their own propaganda? Goebbels clearly didn't believe most of the irrational nonsense which he fed daily to the German press, and yet it is by now a historically established fact that a great part of the Nazi ruling elite, and especially Hitler himself, were so deeply enmeshed in their own irrational dreamworld that the rational working of the machine of government and administration was disastrously affected. Does not a totalitarian setup which excludes critical thought and at the same time tends more and more to enclose the ruling elite in its own delusional system, lead to progressive incapacity for rational and adequate action?

A few quotes from H. R. Trevor-Roper's *The Last Days of Hitler* are to the point: "It is not only political intelligence which is killed by the lack of criticism inherent in absolute power; for technical progress . . . is equally dependent upon the free opposition of minds and methods. . . . Now that all German secrets have been disclosed, the decline of German science under the Nazis has become apparent . . . how could medicine advance when the direction of studies, the allocation of resources, the judgment of results, and the promotion of merit depended upon corrupt chalatans . . . and crackbrained fanatics. Even in military science the same decline is apparent. . . . The propaganda of Goebbels, the sycophancy of Keitel, nourished the selfdelusions of unchallenged power; no mind, no fact was allowed to contest the dogmas of strategic genius: and at the end . . . Hitler was still there, still the central figure, still the ultimate authority; but a Chinese wall separated him from the outside world of reality. He listened not to other voices, but to echoes of his own; for none of the serving courtiers dared speak, or even know the truth. . . . "

99.99 Percent Pure

MOSCOW, Dec. 27 (UP)—Eighty-four of the 766,647 candidates for local and regional offices in the Russian Soviet Republic were rejected by the voters in last week's single-ticket election. . . . Voters may vote either for or against the ticket, but there is no opposition slate. . . . More than 99 per cent of those eligible to vote took part in the elections. "With what seriousness, with what a masterly approach the voters went to the polls!" commented the Army newspaper, Red Star.

—*N. Y. Herald-Tribune, Dec.* 28, 1947.

A British scientist, C. D. Darlington, reporting in the London *Nineteenth Century and After* for October 1947, on the purge of Soviet biological science and the attempt to develop a purely *Soviet biology* as opposed to *Bourgeois biology* reaches conclusions similar to those of Trevor-Roper: "Science proceeds very largely by disagreements, controversies or conflicts, processes which are resolved outside of Russia by new synthesis. Inside Russia they are resolved in the scientific as in the political field by the destruction of one of the parties to the conflict. This is bound to rush fundamental research in Russia into irretrievable ruin." Earlier, he states: "There can be no doubt that the genetics controversy means the collapse of an important part of the scientific foundations of an improved agriculture on which the peoples of the Soviet Union depend for their food."

What is shown here for biological science may well be true for Russian science in general and for economic and political science in particular. The invasion of the irrational in the form of propaganda threatens in the long run to undermine rational understanding even among those who are supposedly "in-the-know." It is to be doubted that Machiavellian politics—i.e., a politics which aims at keeping truth as the oasis of the Prince while propaganda is the desert of the people—can be maintained for long. In the end the Prince becomes a victim of his own propaganda, imprisoned in his own ideological cobwebs. He can no longer function rationally in a normal universe. He thinks that he can kill inconvenient facts by abolishing the institute which registers them. Those who, like James Burnham, are excessively impressed by the efficiency of the totalitarian state, might pause to reflect that there are, indeed, more indications than one that partial operations in the totalitarian state might be carried on with superior efficiency by brilliant technicians but that overall direction and control, geared to a delusional ideological system, may finally collapse because of the inability to sanely appraise a situation in its totality. What did an irate Hitler say to General Halder? "The General Staff has such damned objective views."

LOUIS CLAIR and SEBASTIAN FRANCK

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7. The Music Purge

NICOLAS NABOKOV

SOVIET Russia is an autocratic oligarchy in which 200 million people are governed by an "apparatus," as they say in the Soviet Union, of two million elected, or, better, selected people, who, in turn, are controlled by a group of about two hundred persons—the Central Committee of the CP. From among the latter group, some fifteen people who form the Politburo have the privilege of "free" political thinking—subject, however, to the ultimate approval or disapproval of the *Khoyain*, the Russian term by which Stalin is called among his associates, and which has no precise equivalent in English—the meaning lies somewhere between "owner" and "boss"; the French *patron* comes perhaps closest.

Xenophobic attitudes and attacks on European culture (both Western and Eastern) have been sporadically a part of the Politburo policy since 1929. At times they have increased in intensity, as in 1937, and 1948. At other times, for opportunistic reasons, such as the exigencies of this war, they were temporarily suspended.

The resumption—or, as they say in the Soviet Union, the "activation" of the campaign against "decadent bourgeois culture" started immediately after the end of the last war. At the time, its main protagonist was (and still is) one of the secretaries of the Central Committee of the Party, comrade Zhdanov. The order of events was as follows: first came the statement in the summer of 1946 concerning the need to clean up the repertory of the Soviet theatres. Next on th 20th of Semptember, 1946, Zhdanov made a speech in which he attacked all those writers in the Soviet Union who were in some way connected with pre-revolutionary trends. In it he said, quoting Gorky, that the period between 1907 and 1917 was "the most degrading, decadent, and shameful period in the history of Russian literature," and, "in general, in the history of the Russian intelligentsia." "This," declared comrade Zhdanov, "was the period which was dominated by decaying Western influences and Western movements, such as the symbolists, imagists, impressionists, and decadent writers of all kinds who renounced their ties to the people, promulgated the principle of art for art's sake, and preached intentional lack of ideology in literature, thus covering up their own ideological and moral decay. In short, they were trying to conceal, by pretty forms, a total lack of content."

Zhdanov's whole speech re-stated the 1937 thesis that "formalism" is the vice of European culture, and that under formalism are grouped all those writers and poets who do not either represent the so-called "classical tradition" of Russian literature, or do not collaborate in the socialistic construction of the Soviet Union. Those who do are, *eo ipso*, Socialist realists.

Next came the attacks on the philosophic and scientific fronts. These attacks are little known in the U.S.A. because they were not dramatized by the Central Committee as were the attacks on literature and music. There was, for example, the onslaught on a *History of Philosophy*, by Alexandrov (himself the chief of the propaganda committee of the government of the USSR), which was denounced for giving too much credit to non-Marxian philosophy, and for presenting Marxism as a logical development of Western thought. Another instance was the move against Professor Ogolovets, the Russian historian of musical theory and acoustics. The story of Mr. O. is quite instructive. In the preface to his *History of Musical Theory*, Mr. O., with regret, mentions the fact that there has been very little acoustical research in the Soviet Union, and that, unfortunately, Lenin never expressed himself on the subject of acoustics. This enraged the cultural editorialists of Soviet newspapers, who answered that although Lenin may have said nothing about acoustics, Lenin, Stalin, and Marx *did* express their views on science in general—and thus, by implication, on the science of acoustics. Mr. O., by slavishly following the Western bourgeois scientific tradition, was not taking into account the great revolution of Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist approach to science. Thus he was not collaborating in the Socialist construction of the Soviet state, but only promoting his own reputation. This attack was coupled with a number of slurs against Mr. Ogolovets' integrity and honesty. He was thrown out of the Soviet Musicians' Alliance, and out of the Moscow University.

On February 11th, 1948, came the decree of the Central Committee of the Communist Party concerning an opera by a young Georgian composer, Muradeli, called *The Great Friendship*. This decree in a sense summarizes and makes reference to the previous attacks on the literary, scientific and other cultural fronts.* It makes clear, for the first time, the cultural position and attitude of the Central Committee and of the Politburo. It classifies under "formalism" all those Soviet composers who were in any way a part of the general European evolution of modern music, and, by inference, draws the same conclusions in regard to other media of art.

On the 28th of February, the Moscow weekly, *Soviet Art*, devoted its whole issue to the explication of the decision of the Central Committee. Since then, the Soviet papers have been full of such "*explications du texte.*" The most interesting article in this first issue is one called "Formalism and its Roots," by a fairly young composer, Tikhon Khrennikov, who, as a result of the purge, has replaced Khachaturian as the president of the Association of Soviet Composers. We can therefore regard Mr. K. as

* For full text of the decree, see "Appendix" at end of this article.—ED.

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an authoritative spokesman of the Central Committee. The most significant part of his article deals with the existence of a link between what he calls the "anti-popular school" in Soviet music, and "the bourgeois decadent movements in the contemporary West, which is the legacy of the pre-revolutionary modern art in Russia." K. says that "it is impossible to name a single composer in the Western world who is not afflicted with formalist vices, with subjectivism, mysticism, and with an utter lack of principles in the matter of ideas." He names all the well-known composers of France, of Central Europe (including Schoenberg and Hindemith) and a few American and British composers among whom he singles out Gian-Carlo Menotti and Benjamin Britten. "This music," he says, "openly harks back to the primitive barbaric cultures of prehistoric society, and extols the eroticism, psychopathic mentality, sexual perversion, amorality and shamelessness of the bourgeois hero of the 20th Century." The villains of Russian music, according to K., are Stravinsky and Prokofieff—but the arch villain is Sergei Diaghilev, who, from 1905, "openly called on Russian artists to serve an apprenticeship with the modern West."

Thus the music of our time, which we believe has been the result of a powerful revival of creative energies, liberating European music from the remnants of romanticism, is, according to the Central Committee's spokesman, decadent, formalistic, and corrupt. We are asked to turn our backs on everything that has been composed since 1905, and to return to what, by a peculiar confusion of terms, is called the "classical tradition"—that is, the music of the late 19th century, and the cultivation of the folk song. In this way, the government of the "first Socialist state" openly proclaims its adherence to reactionary, petty-bourgeois tastes in music.

How did this come about? What are the reasons for it?

It is significant that both purges, 1937 and 1948, came as a result of Stalin's visit to a performance of a Soviet opera. It is therefore interesting to consider Stalin's own tastes in music. No one in the Soviet Union denies the fact that the father of the people is a great lover of music. He goes to the theatre, to the ballet, and occasionally to the opera. He apparently does not like symphonic concerts. The kind of music he enjoys has to be tuneful in a conventional, easy way—that is, built around the commonplaces of 19th century semi-popular music. Further, he likes folk songs. He does not like operetta, with the exception of *The Merry Widow*. And he does not like "advanced" jazz, such as boogie woogie.

Here is an approximate standard program of a private concert given in the St. George Hall at the Kremlin for Stalin and his important guests. Usually the concerts start with one or two celebrated Soviet instrumentalists playing an extremely virtuoso piece. The next number may be a piece or two sung by the Red Army Chorus, or a national chorus of some Soviet Republic. After this, the "National Jazz Band" may perform a piece of Soviet jazz. This National Jazz Band is a large, military-type orchestra, which has very little in common with the American popular jazz band. Occasionally there might be a movement from a classical string quartet included in such a program. However, Stalin does not find the sound of a single string quartet loud enough, and therefore three to five of the best Moscow String Quartets are usually invited to play the same pieces in unison. The concert may end with a number of acrobats or jugglers, and a selection from the most popular operas, such as *Traviata, Rigoletto,* and *Onegin,* sung by some famous Soviet singer.

On the whole, the taste of Stalin and his friends in the Politburo is very similar to the average tastes of the middle-income Soviet official. Anyone who has been in Soviet Russia must have noticed the nostalgia of this new middle class for the sentimental semi-popular songs of the late 19th century, and for the schmaltz of 19th century Italian opera. How often Russian officers and their families would speak enthusiastically to me about, for example, the most hackneyed pieces of Rachmaninoff, and would politely listen and occasionally nod to me in half-hearted approval when I praised a work of Prokofieff. Now that the new decree of the Central Committee has been promulgated, they won't even have to nod.

In part, it is this correspondence of taste between Stalin and the Soviet officials that has dictated the recent action of the Central Committee. In the USSR, arts exist only to serve the standard tastes of a certain stratum of Soviet society. Behind the high-sounding ideological attacks on "formalism," the Soviet bureaucracy is indulging its own reactionary, petty-bourgeois tastes. But this is only part of the picture.

The most important question to be answered is, *why* did the Soviet government so dramatically center its attack on music? Music is a medium of communication which has no ideographic content. That is, it is not representational of any concrete ideas. Thus, it is rather difficult for a layman to know what actually goes on in a new piece of music, particularly when this piece of music is of a symphonic or chamber orchestra character. And notice that the present attack is directed precisely toward the excessive use of these two forms of musical composition. A character of a famous Russian satirist of the Czarist regime, Saltikov, once said, "What I don't understand is undoubtedly dangerous to the security of the state." The Politburo feels that the composers are doing something over which it has no immediate control. Some form of supervision must be established. Let them write music that is pleasing and comprehensible to the new Soviet middle class. That will keep the composers from participating in mysterious, unknown, and *therefore* subversive activities. A good name for such activities is "formalism."

Despite all the jargon about formalism, classicism, and Socialist Realism, the real fear of the Soviet government is the state of mind which may grow within a closed body of specialists, with its own favorably-inclined critics, and its possible protectors in government circles. This state of mind is *creative individualism*—which is still tied in many ways to the Western European tradition. It may lead to *political individualism*, particularly since some of the composers, with their wide national and international reputations, may feel themselves by definition outside and above

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the Party line. One should not forget that the Politburo considers the people it governs as a part of an immense pedagogical enterprise, and the individual is only valid insofar as he actively and submissively participates in this enterprise. The Politburo and the Central Committee of the Party are both teachers and wardens.

It is evident that a closed cell within the framework of a totalitarian police state is intolerable. It is also evident that music is only one of the areas of intellectual life where such a cell may attempt to form itself. The theatre, the literary world, the cinema, painting, and pure science, are other domains which are or may become dangerous in the eyes of the Politburo. It is, therefore, only natural that the Soviet government has extended its cultural purge to all these areas.

APPENDIX: FULL TEXT OF THE SOVIET MUSIC DECREE

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The following resolution was published in "Izvestia" of February* 11, 1948. *For the translation—which is by Bernard L. Koten of the American-Russian Institute for Cultural Relations—we are indebted to the N. Y. "Daily Worker" of March* 12. *The "Worker" printed the text "as a service to musicians, composers, and the general public which has shown such great interest in this notable cultural event." We agree that a service has indeed been rendered, though perhaps not precisely the one the editors had in mind. They denounce the hirelings of the bourgeois press for having "badly distorted" the music decree, and confute the lackeys of the pen by printing the full text. The fact is, however, as the reader may verify for himself, that the actual text is more damning than any distortion could be. The bureaucratic mentality, as perfected in the USSR, goes far beyond anything Westbrook Pegler could dream up.*

THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION considers that the opera, "Great Friendship" (music by V. Muradeli, libretto by G. Mdivani), produced by the Bolshoi Theatre of the USSR during the celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of the October Revolution, is unsound both in its music and its subject matter and is an inartistic composition.

1.

The opera's fundamental shortcomings are rooted first of all in the music of the opera. The music of the opera is inexpressive and poor. There is no one melody or aria in it that remains in the memory. It is muddled and inharmonious, constructed entirely of dissonances, of combinations of sounds that grate on the ear. Into individual lines and scenes having a pretense to melody, there break in, all of a sudden, dissonant noises completely alien to the normal human ear which cause a reaction of depression in the listener.

There is no organic connection between the musical accompaniment and the development of the action on the stage. The vocal parts of the opera—choral solo and ensemble singing—create a poor impression.

As a result of all this the potentialities of the orchestra and the singers remain unrealized.

The composer did not utilize the wealth of folk melodies, songs, tunes and dance motifs in which the creative art of the peoples of the USSR is so rich, specifically the art of the peoples inhabiting the North Caucasus, where the action depicted in the opera takes place. In the pursuit of false "originality" in music, the composer Muradeli has scorned the best traditions and experience of classical opera in general and Russian classical opera in particular, which is outstanding in its inner content, its wealth of melody and breadth of range, its peoples, and the fine, beautiful, clear musical form which has made Russian opera the best opera in the world, a genre of music loved by and accessible to wide groups of people.

The plot of the opera, which lays pretense to being a portrayal of the struggle for the establishment of Soviet power and of the friendship of the peoples in the North Caucasus in 1918-1920, is historically false and artificial. One gets the incorrect impression from the opera that such Caucasian peoples as the Georgians and the Osetins were hostile to the Russian people in that epoch, which is historically false, since the obstacle in the way of the establishment of the friendship of peoples in that period in the North Caucasus were the Ingush and the Chechens.

THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION considers that the failure of Muradeli's opera is a result of the formalist path taken by Muradeli, false and ruinous to the creative production of the Soviet composer.

2.

As the conference of leaders of Soviet music conducted by THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION has shown, the failure of Muradeli's opera is not an isolated incident, but is closely tied up with the unfortunate situation in contemporary Soviet music, with the prevalence of the formalist trend among Soviet composers.

Back in 1936 in connection with the appearance of the Dmitri Shostakovich opera, "Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk," the anti-public formalist distortions in the work of Shostakovich were exposed in "Pravda," the organ of THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION and the harm and danger of this tendency to the fate of the development of Soviet music was disclosed. "Pravda," speaking out then upon the instruction of THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION, clearly formulated the demands which the Soviet people make upon their composers.

Despite these warnings and in spite of the directives given by THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION in its decisions on the magazines "Zvezda" and "Leningrad," on the moving picture film "The Great Life," on the repertories of the dramatic theatres and measures for their improvement, there was no reorganization affected in Soviet music. The individual successes of some Soviet composers in the creation of new songs which have found recognition through wide circulation among the people, or creation of music for the cinema, etc., does not change the general picture of the situation.

3.

In the field of symphonic and operatic composition matters are specially bad. We are speaking of composers who confine themselves to the formalist anti-public trend. This trend has found its fullest manifestation in the works of such composers as Comrades D. Shostakovich, S. Prokofiev, A. Khachaturian, V. Shebalin, G. Popov, N. Myaskovsky and others, in whose compositions the formalist distortions, the anti-democratic tendencies in music, alien to the Soviet people and to its artistic taste, is especially graphically represented.

Characteristic of such music are the negation of the basic principles of classical music; a sermon for atonality, dissonance and disharmony, as if this were an expression of "progress" and "innovation" in the growth of musical composition as melody; a passion for confused, neuropathic combinations which transform music into cacophony, into a chaotic piling up of sounds. This music reeks strongly of the spirit of the contemporary modernist bourgeois music of Europe and America which reflects the marasmus of bourgeois culture, the full denial of musical art, its impasse.

An essential quality of the formalist trend is also the denial of polyphonic music and singing based on a synchronized combination and development of a number of independent and melodic

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lines, and a passion for monotonal and unisonal music and singing, frequently without words, which is a violation of the many-voiced musical-song structure characteristic of our people, and which leads to the impoverishment and decline of music.

In defiance of the best traditions of Russian and Western classical music, rejecting these traditions as if they were "obsolete," "old fashioned," "conservative," arrogantly slighting, as advocates of "primitive traditionalism" and "epigonism," composers who conscientiously try to master and develop methods of classical music, many Soviet composers, in pursuit of falsely-conceived innovation, have lost contact in their music with the demands and the artistic taste of the Soviet people, have shut themselves off in a narrow circle of specialists and musical gourmands, have lowered the high social role of music and narrowed its meaning, limiting it to a satisfaction of the distorted tastes of aesthetic individualists.

4.

The formalist trend in Soviet music has given rise to a one-sided passion for complex forms of instrumental, symphonic, textless music among a section of Soviet composers, and to a scornful attitude towards such musical genres as opera, choral music, popular music for small orchestra, for folk instruments, vocal ensembles, etc.

All this inevitably leads to the fact that the fundamentals of vocal culture and mastery of dramaturgy are being lost and that composers are forgetting how to write for the people. This is evidenced by the fact that in recent times not one Soviet opera on a level with the Russian opera classics has been created.

The breaking away of some Soviet musicians from the people has reached such a point that a corrupt "theory" has spread among them, according to which the fact that the music of many contemporary Soviet composers is incomprehensible to the people, is explained by the fact that the people, seemingly, have not as yet "grown up" to an understanding of their complex music, that they will understand it in a hundred years and that it is not worth-while becoming upset if some musical compositions find no listeners.

This thoroughly individualistic theory, anti-public to the core, has made it possible for some composers and musicologists to fence themselves off from the people, from the criticism of Soviet society, to an even greater degree and to shut themselves up in their shells.

The cultivation of all these views and others like them will bring the greatest possible harm to Soviet musical art. A tolerant attitude toward such views means the dissemination among leading figures of Soviet musical culture of tendencies alien to it, tendencies which lead to an impasse in the development of music, to the liquidation of musical art.

The unsound, anti-public, formalist trend in Soviet music also has a destructive influence on the training and education of young composers in our conservatories, primarily in the Moscow Conservatory, of which Comrade Shebalin is director, where the formalist trend is the ruling trend. The students are not imbued with respect for the best traditions of Russian and Western classical music. Admiration for the creative art of the people, for democratic musical forms, is not developed in them. The creative work of many of the conservatory students represents a blind imitation of the music of D. Shostakovich, S. Prokofiev and others.

5.

The Central Committee of Communist Party of the Soviet Union finds an absolutely intolerable situation in Soviet musical criticism. Among critics the leading position is held by the adversaries of Russian realistic music, by the protagonists of decadent, formalistic music. These critics pronounce every succeeding composition of Prokofiev, Shostakovich, Myaskovsky, Shebalin as "a new conquest of Soviet music" and they eulogize the subjectivism, the constructivism, the extreme individualism, the professional complications of the language of this music; that is, precisely all that should be exposed by the critic. Instead of combatting the views and theories harmful and alien to the principles of socialist realism, music criticism itself assists in the dissemination of them, extolling them and proclaiming as "advanced" those composers who have in common these false creative tendencies in their work.

Musical criticism has stopped expressing the opinion of Soviet society, the opinion of the people and has made of itself a trumpet for individual composers.

Some music critics have taken to humoring and fawning upon one or another of the leading musicians, praising their works, in every way, for reasons of friendship, rather than criticizing them on the basis of objective principles.

6.

This all means that among a section of the Soviet composers, vestiges of bourgeois ideology, nourished on influences from contemporary, decadent Western European and American music, have not yet been overcome. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union considers that this unfavorable situation on the Soviet musical front has arisen as a result of the incorrect line in the field of Soviet music which has been carried out by the Committee on Affairs of Arts of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, and the Organizational Committee of the Union of Soviet Composers.

The committee on Affairs of Arts of the Council of Ministers of the USSR (Comrade Khrapchenko) and the Organizational Committee of the Union of Soviet Composers (Comrade Khachaturian) have actually been encouraging a formalistic trend alien to the Soviet people, instead of developing a realistic trend in Soviet music, the bases of which are a recognition of the great progressive role of the classical heritage, especially the traditions of the Russian school of music; the use of this heritage and its further development; the coordinating in music of high content and artistic perfection of musical form; true and realistic music, its deep-rooted organic ties with the people and their musical and vocal creations; the high professional mastery and at the same time simplicity and accessibility of musical productions.

The Organizational Committee of the Union of Soviet Composers has turned itself into a weapon of a group of composer-formalists and has become a major hot-bed of formalist distortions.

A musty atmosphere has been created in the Organizational Committee; creative discussions have been lacking. The leaders of the Organizational Committee, and his musicologists who have grouped themselves around them, have been eulogizing anti-realistic, modernistic compositions, not worthy of support, whereas works outstanding in their realistic character, have been pronounced second rate, have remained unnoticed and have been treated in an offhand manner.

Composers priding themselves on their "innovations," their "arch revolutionism" in the fields of music, have been speaking out as champions of the most backward and musty conservatism

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in their activity in the Organizational Committee, disclosing an arrogant intolerance at the slightest manifestation of criticism.

THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION considers that such an attitude toward tasks of Soviet music as has developed in the Committee on Affairs of Arts of the Council of Ministers of the USSR and in the Organizational Committee of the Union of Soviet Composers can be tolerated no further, since it is of the greatest harm to the development of Soviet music.

7.

In the last years the cultural demands and the level of artistic taste of the Soviet people have risen extraordinarily. The Soviet people expects from the composers, works of high quality and high ideals in all genres—in the field of operatic and symphonic music, in the creation of songs, in choral and dance music.

In our country composers have limitless possibilities for creation at their disposal. All the necessary conditions for a genuine flowering of musical culture have been created. Soviet composers have an audience such as no other composer has known in the past. It would be unforgivable not to utilize all these rich possibilities and not to direct one's creative efforts along a correct realistic path.

THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION resolves:

1. *To censure the formalistic trend in Soviet music as antipublic and as, in fact, leading to the liquidation of music.*
2. *To propose to the Administration of Propaganda and Agitation of the Central Committee and to the Committee on Affairs of Arts the correcting of the situation in Soviet music, the liquidation of the shortcomings indicated in this resolution of the Central Committee and provision for the development of Soviet music along realistic lines.*
3. *To call upon Soviet composers to permeate themselves with a consciousness of the high demands made of musical creation by the Soviet people and, having cleared from their path everything that weakens our music and hinders its growth, to insure such a rise in creative works as will quickly move Soviet musical culture forward and bring about the creation of fully worthwhile musical works in all fields, of productions of high quality, worthy of the Soviet people.*
4. *To approve the organizational measures of the appropriate party and Soviet organs directed toward the improvement of musical affairs.*

8. Origins of Soviet Literature

VLADIMIR WEIDLE

TO what extent is Soviet literature continuous with, and to what extent does it represent a break with pre-1917 Russian literature? This is the question these notes will attempt to answer.

At the turn of the century, Russian letters began to emerge from a dull, grey period which came near being an eclipse, especially in poetry but also in prose—and this despite the fact that Tolstoy was still alive and Chekhov at the top of his powers. The intellectual climate of the closing decades of the century, as it had developed since 1860, was one of naive positivism and aggressive utilitarianism. Almost the entire intelligentsia held the kind of "advanced ideas" that rejected out of hand anything that could not be demonstrated in three minutes to the most limited intelligence—such "advanced" ideas, for example, as that Shakespeare's plays were not worth a pair of shoes, and that poetic metaphors were simply lies. The most intolerant of such ideologies was still dominant, that of Pisarev, which bitterly made fun of the experiments by which Pasteur had just refuted the theory of spontaneous germination of microbes—because those experiments seemed to undermine the doctrine of materialism. All philosophy, all art, all humanism could not but appear suspect to such spirits. Had not Chernyshevsky pronounced, seizing on an unfortunate remark of Pascal's, that a real apple was in every way preferable to a painted apple because it could be eaten? Had not Pushkin been rebuked for writing of "the dust of ice crystals" in *Eugene Onegin* —since in winter, after a snowfall, there can be no dust? *Anna Karenina* was saluted by the critic, Saltykov (who wrote novels himself) with an epithet one may bowdlerize into "a gynecological novel"—while a still more "advanced" journalist exhorted Saltykov himself to give up his sterile literary preoccupation and shoulder a really useful job: the popularization of the natural sciences. All objections to this kind of thinking, of course, were instantly denounced as reactionary attacks on the sacrosanct "younger generation." One of whose representatives, Tkatchev—who found *War and Peace* "a book that would be dangerous if it were not so mediocre"—also distinguished himself by proposing, with a straight face, that despotism could be overthrown and the revolution enthroned by the execution of all Russians, of both sexes, who were over twenty-five years of age. Such persons, reasoned the young Mr. Tkatchev, were obviously incapable of assimilating new ideas.*

The Symbolist Revival

Although these ideas were no longer new as the century drew to a close, it took all the effort of another—and an exceptionally talented—younger generation to dethrone them. This clearing of the air and the cultural revival which followed were the result of the combined action of the nation's creative forces. The hunger for knowledge, whether through the senses or the mind, could not indefinitely content itself with the meagre diet doled out to it by positivist obscurantism. . . . But the most violent revolt against the immediate past was one of feeling, taste and imagination in the sphere of letters, and above all in poetry.

For the survivors of the past century, the young enthusiasts of art and letters were "just" esthetes, that is to say, people morally suspect, if only because of their indifference to political matters. But if estheticism is to art

* Translator's Note: Lenin greatly admired Tkatchev, whose authoritarian political theories influenced Lenin's thinking. After 1917, he urged "every one to read and study him." (See Shub's "Lenin," pp. 54 and 371.)

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what hypocrisy is to morality, the former only appears when the latter exists, and the advent of the esthetes was therefore the inescapable sign that art had become richer and more intense. The passions, successive or simultaneous, for Oscar Wilde and Aubrey Beardsley, for the *Jugendstil* of Munich, for the decadent or "fin de siècle" mood of Paris—it is true that these were not very exhilarating in themselves. But no artistic movement is exempt from certain excrescences; all carry with them a submerged snobbishness which they arouse and on which they batten. The rich Moscow merchant who "takes up" modernism is a little absurd as a human type, but two such merchants made admirable collections of French art from Manet to Picasso, and others have given effective aid to the discovery of the ancient and precious art of ikon-painting. . . .

In poetry, it was symbolism which now triumphed, with Alexander Blok and with many others; from 1900 to 1912, it dominated Russian literature. In Russia, it meant something quite different from its French expression; its religious and mystical tendencies drew it close to German romanticism. It had, furthermore, national roots in the work of Dostoevsky, Tiutchev, and Soloviev, so that it was not merely a reaction to European influences. At the same time, it worked powerfully to bring Russian literature closer to the great European cultures. Lacking a past as oppressively rich as that of French or English literature, Russian literature had preserved throughout the 19th century the traits of a young literature, one which did not yet have to worry about the overworking of language and traditional forms, and which was embarassed by an overabundance of content rather than by an attenuation of form. Only in our century, with the rise of symbolism, did its development come at all close to that of Western literature. The writer who most clearly expressed this new situation was, undoubtedly, Andrey Biely.

Andrey Biely

The work of Biely—poet, novelist, critic, theosophist, esthete, unparalleled virtuoso in both verse and prose—is little known outside Russia, although one would think that it would be especially interesting to Western readers. A thing of sketches, improvisations, strokes of genius and splendid failures, his work is above all the product of a writer who conceives of the world only in terms of his own personality, finding at the end of innumerable attempts at evasion always the shadow of himself. As a poet—despite such astonishing successes as *First Meeting,* the beginning of an autobiographical poem he abandoned—he gives the effect of an actor who, instead of continuing the monologue he has begun, suddenly forgets his lines and stammers a personal confession having nothing to do with his part. As a novelist, he left unfinished the remarkable *Kotik Letaev,* where he attempted a bold and imaginative reconstruction of early infancy. His two chief novels, *Petersburg* (1916) and *Moscow* (also unfinished, of which two volumes had appeared when he died), like that other dazzling fragment, *The Baptized Chinaman,* and like the oldest novel, *The Silver Dove,* tried to sum up the spiritual content of an epoch but succeeded in communicating only the kind of hallucination to which, for a solitary spirit, the world is reduced when an attempt is made to render its most subtle irradiations.

In Andrey Biely we may observe a hypertrophy of the ego comparable to that in Proust, without the inspired patience which carried to completion the gigantic structure of *Remembrance of Things Past;* an inability to give himself wholly to a work, to "lose his soul in order to save it," which makes one think of André Gide; a yielding to the determinism of unconscious forces and to the projection of their shadow on the world which often anticipates the discoveries of psychoanalysis and the technique of surrealism; and, finally, a treatment of words—doing violence to familiar words and normal syntax, trying to work out a new language—which one can only compare with the Joyce of *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake.* Let me add that all these qualities, so familiar to contemporary European readers, appeared in Biely's work before 1914, that he owes nothing, therefore, to the influences one might otherwise suspect, and that, returning to Russia after two years abroad, he continued to write there until his death in 1934.*

Poetry also, on the eve of the war and the revolution, was beginning to veer toward the West. Shortly after the death (1910) of the great "decadent" poet, Annensky, who alone of the Russians had shared the conception of poetry held by Mallarmé and Valéry in France, at the very time when Alexander Blok was going beyond symbolism to create a poetic style at once more personal and more national, a reaction set in against symbolism that was analogous to that which in France culminated in the publication of the *Stanzas* of Moréas. This movement, to which its leader, Goumilev, shot in 1921,† gave the arbitrary name of "akmeism," worked toward a more precise

*Translator's Note: Cf. pp. 46-55 of *Literature and Revolution,* where Trotsky pays his respects to Biely, in whose work "the inter-revolutionary (1905-1917) literature, which is decadent in its mood and over-refined in its technique . . . finds its most condensed expression." Trotsky's political-moral approach ("He has no hint of ideal revolutionism . . . he is thoroughly conservative, passive and moderate."), the attack on "formalism" ("His verbal twists lead nowhere . . . fetish of the word . . . falsely complex . . . just as if you were let into a house through the chimney, and on entering you saw that there was a door, and that it was much easier to enter that way"), the contempt—mixed with fear—of the writer who insists on his own individual perceptions ("He is always occupied with himself, narrating about himself, walking around himself, sniffing himself and licking himself . . . this servile preoccupation with oneself, this apotheosis of the ordinary facts of one's personal and spiritual routine . . . so unbearable in our age where mass and speed are really making a new world"), and above all, the coarse, abusive tone ("landlord . . . bureaucrat . . . his very pen-name testifies to his antithesis to the Revolution ['Biely' means 'white' in Russian] . . . this self-satisfied seeking for psychological nits, this mystic execution of them on the fingernail")—all this is uncomfortably close to the kind of thing one reads in the current Soviet press. The similarity is all the more significant, and disturbing, if one considers that Trotsky wrote his book, in part, as a protest against the kind of narrow political attacks on literature that already, in 1924, the Stalinists were making. Personally, Trotsky drew back from the practical implications of his ideology. Stalin was more logical.

† See Victor Serge's "Vignettes of NEP," POLITICS, June, 1945, pp. 179-180.—Tr.

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poetic language which amounted to a still more self-conscious and "artistic" conception of poetry than symbolism. Anna Akhmatova escaped the ill effects of this rather narrow ideal of perfection—literary rather than poetic—thanks to a natural lyricism and an impeccable instict for rhythm and emotional intonation. Ossip Mandelstamm, another of the most talented "akmeist" poets, developed in the direction of the futurist school, which was rising at the same time. The futurists concentrated on a renewal of poetic language, sometimes by deliberately vulgarizing it, as with Mayakovsky, sometimes by replacing it by an artificial idiom which often sounded like the work of a madman with flashes of genius, as with Khlebnikov.

Continuity Under NEP

The first books to come out after the period of War Communism (1918-1921), during which very few literary works appeared, were thin volumes of verse by Blok, Goumilev, Mandelstamm, and two poets who were not neophytes but who did not fully reveal their talent until then: Khodassevitch and Pasternak. The latter drew somewhat on both futurism and the Goumilev school; the former, whose poetic production is perhaps the most important in Russian letters since the death of Blok, wrote in a style that owed less to his contemporaries than to the Russian classics. . . .

But the new generation which appeared in 1921 and 1922 was made up of prose writers rather than poets. It was influenced by Russian writers: Biely, whose work inspired Boris Pilnyak's *Naked Year;* Remizov, whose influence was transmitted mostly through Zamyatin; and Gorky, who published his best work during the war and the 1917 revolution, and whose most talented disciple was Constantine Fedin. The new generation also showed a lively interest in foreign literature, especially English and American, in novels of adventure and fantasy, and in "pure" literature which followed out the line of the two schools of poetry we have just described. A whole new literary school began to take shape in Leningrad, where a group of young writers gave themselves the Hoffmanesque name, The Serapion Brotherhood, and where also an interesting new critical tendency appeared, that of the "formalists" (Victor Chlovsky, Eichenbaum, Tynianov), which reduced the work of art, in order to understand it better, to a technical system, a conscious construction aimed at producing a certain effect. Some of the Serapions (Kaverin, Slonimsky, Zostchenko, as well as certain young novelists: Leonov, Babel, Olecha) devoted themselves to literary experiments that were sometimes fascinating and sometimes a bit precious: wilfully complex plots, zigzag typography, all kinds of capricious and experimental writing. In general, Russian literature of this period—that of the NEP—reflected the enthusiasm of the early revolutionary years and produced a number of stylistic innovations (which, however, were in no way opposed to the spirit of the pre-revolutionary period). Whatever one's judgment of the productions of this time, one had to admit that there were no signs of either stagnation or retreat, and no lack of creative energy.

Liquidation Under the Five-Year Plan

If things have changed considerably since then, it is not because the above movements decayed inwardly but rather because they were subjected, year after year, to increasingly severe governmental pressure. Poetry, already enfeebled, was the first to suffer. Khodassevitch emigrated, to crown his work with the despairing verses of *European Night.* Mayakovsky, before committing suicide, busied himself with the manufacture of advertising couplets for the State department stores. Akhmatova published nothing for years. Mandelstamm, after several extremely interesting ventures in prose, limited himself to translation; he was sent into exile, and disappeared during the war. Pasternak is the only Russian poet left who exhibits, at considerable personal risk, some degree of creative freedom.*

Nor has prose been exempt. Since formalist criticism has been excommunicated by the official school, Chlovsky works in the cinema, Tynianov writes historical novels, and Eichenbaum, along with many of his friends, has taken refuge in humble tasks of scholarship. The Serapion Brotherhood quickly scattered. Babel fell silent. Olecha produced nothing significant after *Envy.* Pilnyak disappeared after having sacrificed his talent, like so many others, to a "factory literature" preaching the joys of industrialization. Leonov debased his great talent to the same job. Zostchenko saved himself for a while through humor, but his literary role had been submerged in that of the journalistic "funny man" long before his recent disgrace.

Little by little, by methods that were varied but always efficient, the literary growth of the twenties was liquidated. And as its chief figures retreated into the shadows, there appeared, bit by bit, at the center of the stage the Others, the representatives of the true Soviet literature.

Return to 1860

Of this last, there is one observation to be made: it marks a clear return to the "intellectual climate" we described at the beginning of these notes. As one approaches 1930—and still more as one goes beyond that date—one gets the impression of travelling backwards to 1860. Not to Dostoievsky and Tolstoy, of course, but to the "populist" literature and the civic poetry of the period, to the critical directives of Chernychevsky and Pisarev, to the "Left censorship" which punished heretics—and which now has a governmental backing it then lacked, so that if today Tolstoy published his novels, they would be officially denounced as mediocre and the whole force of the State would be put behind the sneer at "the gynecological novel." Intolerance combined with crudity, a low level of critical discussion, a pitiable flatness of style in prose as well as in verse, intellectual and imaginative feebleness

*It should be added that Akhmatova and Zostchenko were the chief scapegoats of the purge initiated by Zhdanov on August 21, 1946. The former's poetry was denounced as "empty, ideal-less, alien to our people" and too close to "Western bourgeois culture." Also, on September 8, 1946, Pasternak's poetry was officially denounced in the same terms: "apolitical and ideal-less, isolated from the masses."—Tr.

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—such was the tone of the sixties (excepting a few writers of genius), and such is the tone of Soviet literature, with no exceptions at all.

Nor is the degeneration confined to letters. Painting has long since returned to the banal level of pictures that "tell a story," as though the renaissance of the early years of the century had never taken place; the Russian equivalents of Roll and Gervex have again become "great artists." Writers and painters have returned to a tradition which they believe, with some reason, to be peculiarly Russian; and they turn to it all the more willingly because it fits in so well with the chauvinism that has become obligatory in the USSR. For our part, however, we doubt that any tradition can be "usable" for Russian writers that is any more distant from the West than that of Blok and Biely —or, for that matter, Pushkin.

A new edition has recently appeared of Gleb Struve's excellent *Soviet Russian Literature*, containing an Epilogue covering the years 1934-1944. Just and conscientious as Mr. Struve's book is, it inevitably gives the reader a false impression of its subject. This is not because of any fault of the author but simply because the bulk of his work is devoted to the pre-1930 period, when the best-known writers were such men as Babel and Zostchenko, Olecha and Kaverin. Today—eighteen years later—if one wants to find a Soviet literary work that one can honestly admire, one is forced to look mainly among the productions of the pre-1930 period. But those productions belonged to the line of *Russian* (as against Soviet) twentieth-century literature, the line of their immediate predecessors both inside and outside of Russia.

Thus to our original question—break or continuity?—the answer seems to be: continuity up to 1930, and a sharp break after that. Soviet literature, from the moment when it can be specifically so named, has nothing in common with the literature of the first thirty years of this century. Its origins are elsewhere: in the period preceding the cultural revival which it cut short—and not in the great writers of that period, but in the spokesmen for the "younger generation" who overwhelmed them with ridicule and insult.

(*Translated by Dwight Macdonald*)

9. BUREAUCRATIC CULTURE: Nicholas I and Josef I

DWIGHT MACDONALD

LET me begin with two excerpts from Alexander Herzen's *My Past and Thoughts*:

(1)

As a student, Polezhaev was renowned for his excellent verses. Among other things he wrote a humorous parody of *Onyegin* called *Sashka* in which, regardless of proprieties, he attacked many things in a jesting tone, in very charming verses.

In the autumn of 1826, Nicholas, after hanging Pestel, Muravyov, and their friends, celebrated his coronation in Moscow. For other sovereigns, these ceremonies are occasions for amnesties and pardons; Nicholas, after celebrating his apotheosis, proceeded again to "strike down the foes of the fatherland."

The secret police brought him Polezhaev's poem.

And so at three o'clock one night, the rector woke Polezhaev, told him to put on his uniform and go to the office. There the director was awaiting him. After looking to see that all the necessary buttons were on his uniform and no unnecessary ones, he invited Polezhaev without any explanation to get into his carriage and drove off with him. He conducted him to the Minister of Public Instruction. The latter put Polezhaev into his carriage and he too drove off with him—but this time straight to the Tsar. . . .

Polezhaev was summoned to the study. The Tsar was standing leaning on the mantel piece and talking to Lieven. He flung a searching and malignant glance at the newcomer.

"Did you write these verses?" "Yes." "Here, prince," the Tsar continued, "I will give you a specimen of university education, I will show you what young men learn there. Read the manuscript aloud," he added, addressing Polezhaev.

The agitation of the latter was so great that he could not read. Nicholas's eyes were fixed immovably upon him. I know them and know nothing so terrible, so hopeless, as those colorless, cold, pewtery eyes.

"I cannot," said Polezhaev.

"Read!" shouted the imperial drum-major.

That shout restored Polezhaev's faculties: he opened the manuscript. Never, he told us, had he seen *Sashka* so carefully copied and on such splendid paper.

At first it was hard for him to read; then as he got more and more into the spirit of the thing, he read the poem in a loud and lively voice. At particularly startling passages, the Tsar made a sign with his hand to the Minister and the latter covered his eyes with horror.

"What do you say to that?" Nicholas inquired at the end of the reading. "I will put a stop to this corruption; these are the last traces, the last remnants. I will root them out! What is his record?"

The Minister, of course, knew nothing of his record, but some human feeling must have stirred in him, for he said: "He has an excellent record, your Majesty."

"That record has saved you, but you must be punished, as an example to others. Would you like to go into the army?"

Polezhaev was silent.

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"I give you a chance of clearing your name in the army. Well?"

"I must obey," answered Polezhaev.

The Tsar went up to him, laid his hand on his shoulder and, saying to him, "Your fate is in your own hands; if I forget, you can write to me," kissed him on the forehead. (I made Polezhaev repeat the story of the kiss a dozen times; it seemed to me so incredible. He swore that it was true.) . . . Polezhaev was led off to the camp and handed over to the army as a common soldier. . . .

Years and years passed. His hopeless, dreary position broke him down: become a police-poet and sing the glories of Nicholas he could not, and that was the only way of escape from the army. There was, however, another means of escape, and he preferred it: he drank to win forgetfulness. There is a terrible poem of his, "To Vodka."

After his death, his poems were published, and his portrait in a soldier's uniform was to have been included in the edition. The censor thought this unseemly, and the poor martyr was portrayed with the epaulettes of an officer—he had been promoted in the hospital.

(2)

What, one may wonder, is the significance of two or three pages published in a monthly review? And yet such is the strength of utterance, such is the power of the spoken word in a land of silence, unaccustomed to free speech, that Tchaadeyev's "Letter" shook all thinking Russia. That letter was a shot that rang out in the dark night. Whether it was something perishing that proclaimed its end, whether it was a signal or a cry for help, whether it heralded the dawn or foretold that it would never be—anyway, it forced all to awake.

And well it might. There had been nothing written since *Woe from Wit* which made so powerful an impression. Between that play and the letter there had been ten years of silence, the Fourteenth of December, the gallows, penal servitude, Nicholas. It was the first break in the national development since the period of Peter the Great. The empty place left by the strong men who had been exiled to Siberia was not filled up. Thought languished, men's minds were working, but nothing was reached. To speak was dangerous, and indeed there was nothing to say. All at once a mournful figure quietly rose and asked for a hearing in order calmly to utter his *lasciate ogni speranza.*

In the summer of 1836 I was sitting at my writing table in Vyatka when the postman brought me the latest number of the *Telescope*. One must have lived in exile and in the wilds to appreciate a new periodical. I abandoned everything, of course, and set to work to cut the *Telescope*. I saw "Philosophical Letters Written to a Lady," unsigned. In a footnote it was stated that these letters had been written by a Russian in French—i.e., this was a translation. This rather put me against them, and I proceeded to read the rest of the magazine first.

At last the turn came for the letters; from the second or third page, I was struck by the mournfully earnest tone. Every word breathed of prolonged suffering, by now grown calm but still bitter. It was written as only men write who have been thinking for years, and who have thought much and learned much from life and not from theory. I read further; the letter grew and developed; it turned into a gloomy denunciation of Russia, the protest of one who for all he had endured longs to utter some part of what is accumulated in his heart. Twice I stopped to take breath and collect my thoughts and feelings; I read on and on. And this was published in Russian by an unknown author! I was afraid I had gone out of my mind. Then I read the letter aloud to Vitberg, then to S——, a young teacher in the local high school, then read it again to myself.

It is very likely that exactly the same thing was happening in all sorts of provincial and distant towns, in Moscow and Petersburg and in country gentlemen's houses. . . . Long cut off from the people, part of Russia had been suffering in silence under the most stupid and prosaic yoke, which gave them nothing in return. Every one felt the oppression of it, every one had something weighing on his heart, and yet all were silent; at last a man had come who told them in his own way what it was. He spoke only of pain. There was no ray of light in his words, nor indeed in his view. Tchaadayev's letter was a merciless cry of reproach and bitterness against Russia. . . . For a moment, all, even the drowsy and the crushed, were roused, alarmed by this menacing voice. All were astounded, most were offended, a dozen men loudly and warmly applauded its author. Talk in the drawing-rooms anticipated government measures, provoked them. . . .

The magazine was at once prohibited; Boldyrev, the censor, was dismissed; Nadyezhdin the editor was sent to Ust-Sysolsk. Nicholas ordered Tchaadayev himself to be declared insane, and made to sign an undertaking to write nothing. Every Saturday he was visited by the doctor and the police-master. They interviewed him and made a report—i.e., gave out over his signature firty-two false statements as per the command of the Most High. . . . Neither the doctor nor the police-master ever hinted what they had come for. . . .

"In Moscow," Tchaadayev used to say, "every foreigner is taken to look at the great cannon and the great bell—the cannon which can never be fired and the bell which fell down before it was rung. It is a strange town in which the objects of interest are distinguished by their absurdity. Or perhaps that great bell without a tongue is a hieroglyph symbolic of that immense dumb land, inhabited by a race calling themselves Slavs as though surprised at the possession of human speech."*

WHAT strikes one, at first glance, is the similarity of atmosphere: the fate of Polezhaev is recapitulated from Yessenin to Mandelstamm; and what could be more apropos than Herzen's summary of Nicholas' "ten years of silence" (Stalin already has enforced twenty): "To speak was dangerous, and indeed there was nothing to say."

In fact, the parallels between Stalin's regime and that of Nicholas, most autocratic of the 19th century Czars, are numerous. Herzen's epigram about Nicholas' police-state could be applied to Josef's: "Genghiz Khan plus the telegraph." It was Nicholas who instituted the Third Sec-

* "Slav" is derived from "slovo"—"word," "language." (Translator's note)

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tion, which has persisted, under Czars and Commissars alike, uneasily changing its name like a criminal his aliases: Okhrana, Cheka, GPU, NKVD, and now MVD. Like Stalin, only less successfully, Nicholas tried to prohibit "Western" ideas. He restricted travel abroad; Stalin abolished it. His censorship was rigorous, being designed, in one official's phrase, "to make printing harmless"; works on logic or philosophy were forbidden; during one year, there were said to be more different censorships than books published. Like Stalin, who in 1936 admonished Soviet composers to produce only tunes the people could whistle on their way to work, Nicholas was not modest about giving esthetic advice: according to Pares, he "recommended to Mr. Pushkin" that he rewrite *Boris Goudenov* "with an elimination of superfluous material, as a novel after the manner of Sir Walter Scott."

But here one takes a second glance, and finds that the similarities of kind are overshadowed by the differences in degree. What Czar Nicholas, with the very best will in the world, was able to do only partially, Czar Stalin has done almost completely. Thus, Pushkin did *not* rewrite *Boris Goudenov* in the manner of Sir Walter Scott, but the most eminent Soviet composers did alter their manner after Stalin's 1938 *obiter dictum,* just as the whole musical world of Russia has been thrown into a tailspin by the fact that Stalin recently found an opera distasteful. The very thing which is usually thought to establish the identity of the 19th century Czarist regime and that of Stalin turns out, on closer inspection, to show almost the opposite: I refer to the censorship and the use of exile and imprisonment to punish dissident thought.

The difference between Nicholas' and Stalin's censorship (as Herzen's story about Tchaadeyev shows) is that between abortion and contraception. The former tried to kill ideas before they reached the public, but the latter prevents their inception in the first place; the former is applied from outside, but the Soviet system resembles our own in that there is no formal censorship at all (except for foreign correspondents) since the whole publishing business is so thoroughly organized by the State, mobilizing the pressure of "public opinion" behind it, that it simply could not occur to a Russian writer to buck it. (In America, the commercial market performs this function; the difference—and it is an important one, to journals like the present one, at least—is that dissident opinion *can* be expressed, to a rather small audience it is true, if a not impossible amount of cash can be raised.)

As for punishment, Nicholas' treatment of Polezaev and Tchaadeyev was mild compared to what the Soviet rulers have done to writers for far less open gestures of defiance —in most cases, indeed, for none at all. Herzen himself only suffered periods of exile to the provinces which were boring and inconvenient but nothing more. And the later Czars were sentimental bunglers, compared to the Commissars, in their treatment of disaffected intellectuals. Chernychevsky was able to write *and publish* from prison his novel, *What Is To Be Done?,* which expressed radical ideas that for a whole generation inspired anti-Czarist actions. Under Alexander II, a pamphlet appeared—or, more accurately, was intercepted by the Okrana—which contained such sentiments as: "The dynasty of the Romanovs and the St. Petersburg bureaucracy must perish. . . . That which is decaying and dying must itself fall into the grave. We have only to give them the last push and throw dirt upon their stinking corpses." The authorship was traced to the well-known Nihilist journalist, D. I. Pisarev. His punishment: four years imprisonment, during which he was allowed to read, write and even to publish.* Lenin wrote important political pamphlets in exile, and Trotsky, in *My Life,* tells how he studied and wrote in Czarist prison and exile. In short, the Czars permitted their prisoners books, writing materials, and enough food to keep alive—a policy of bourgeois softness which their successors have rectified. Small wonder that Jerzy Gliksman's fellow-prisoner in a really up-to-date Russian prison camp, when he tries to cheer her up by telling how his brother in 1913 escaped from Siberian exile, replies impatiently: "Oh, in those sentimental Czarist times. . . . "

"Nothing is more remarkable in the history of the 19th century revolutionary thinkers," writes Maynard, "than the vast amount of thought, dangerous to the existing order, which they succeeded in publishing. Nothing more strik-

* See Frederick C. Barghoorn's interesting article on Pisarev in *The Review of Politics,* April 1948.

Quantity vs. Quality (1): Education

The Soviet Union spends a bigger proportion of its national income on education than any other country in the world. As is well known, illiteracy has been greatly reduced since Czarist times. In 1915, according to an article by Professor Vavilov, president of the Academy of Sciences, in *Izvestia* (Oct. 10, 1947), there were 68 higher educational institutions in Russia, with 112,000 students. In 1941, there were 800, with 667,000 students.

But what do these greatly expanded student bodies learn?

For the grammar-school level, see the current *I Want To Be Like Stalin,* a translation, by George S. Counts, of a textbook now used by students in Soviet normal schools. Soviet school children are taught militarism, chauvinism, abject hero-worship of their elders; they are expected to rise when the teacher enters the room, speak only when spoken to and submit to a discipline more severe than that of the most benighted American schools. (The "Friends of the Soviet Union" over here send their kids to progressive schools, where the teaching is precisely the opposite of what obtains in Russia. Counts' little book should be required reading for them.)

As for the higher level, the kind of learning Soviet college students acquire may be suggested simply by quoting the first and the last sentences of Prof. Vavilov's article, bearing in mind that he holds the most exalted position open to a Soviet intellectual: He begins: "For the first time in the history of humanity, a scientific theory—the theory of social development as formulated by Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin—has become the guiding force in our country for the erection of a new socialist state." He ends "Future years should witness the further vigorous flourishing of Soviet science: the dignity of the Soviet people, our government and Party, our leader and teacher, Josef Vissarionovitch Stalin, that scientist of genius, demands this."

Under the Czars, the universities were seed-beds of rebellion; their seedlings now grow up into young career men, firm in The Faith.

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Quantity vs. Quality (2): Literature

The presses of the Soviet Union probably turn out more copies of books than those of any other nation. The startistics are impressive, indeed rather oppressive. Thus we read in P. Yudin's *Soviet Culture* (Moscow, 1945): "In 1913, 26,000 books were published in Russia, with an aggregate edition of 80 million copies. In 1939, 45,000 books were published in the USSR, with an aggregate edition of 700 million copies." There is no reason to question these figures; nor to doubt that the Soviet public snaps up these huge editions with an eagerness which must sadden American publishers; nor to deny that, while the works of Stalin, Molotov and other popular authors account for a sizable segment of this great production, most of it is devoted to literature. Finally, there is no doubt but that the average Soviet author—along with his colleagues in painting, music, cinema, theatre, and the other arts—gets material rewards unknown in the West except to a few best-sellers. In fact, what with generous royalties, lavish State prizes, and all kinds of special perquisites ranging from automobiles to free country houses, the Soviet art-workers' income ranks with that of the top bureaucracy. What the stock-broker was to pre-1929 America, the novelist or composer is to post-1929 Russia.

And yet, and yet . . . the literature produced by these well-fed capons is trashy and dull. As Vladimir Weidlé notes elsewhere in this issue, 1928—the year that signalized Stalin's complete victory over the Trotsky opposition, the first year of the first Five Year Plan—was also the turning point in Soviet literature. Two decades later, literary production is so mediocre that Russian novels and poetry are seldom translated into other languages. Stalin, Zhdanov, and the other top sergeants of Soviet letters have remembered everything except one thing: capons cannot produce.

As an instance of caponization, take the case of the popular novelist, Alexander Fadayev. Two years ago, Fadayev wrote a novel about the Great Patriotic War entitled, *Young Guard*. It sold 1,160,000 copies and won a $12,500 Stalin Prize. So far, so wonderful. But on December 6 last, *Pravda* criticized Fadayev's novel as "historically untrue" for two reasons: (1) it pictured the population as fleeing in panic before the German advance, whereas the "strategic withdrawals Eastward" were in fact conducted in an "orderly" fashion; (2) it showed Communists learning from Komsomols (Young Communists), whereas the reverse was the fact (since the Communists were older and had thus had more opportunity to learn from Comrade Stalin). Fadayev at once confessed everything: "I quite agree with the criticism, not as a matter of form, but because I deeply understand it." He agreed to rewrite the book, "attentively and lovingly," so as to make it satisfactory to "the high demands of the party and the Soviet people."

Pravda's criticism was well-founded, politically. As Peter Meyer showed (POLITICS, Dec. 1946), the catastrophes of the first two years of the war were such as to force the Stalin regime to relax its grip and let popular resistance to the invaders have some play. This meant giving more freedom to writers than they had had for years. After Stalingrad, the regime began to take back its concessions; the official "line" became that victory was due not to the spontaneous resistance of the people but to the wise planning of the Kremlin. Fadayev's offense was that he had published a novel oriented along pre-Stalingrad lines in the post-Stalingrad period—i.e., had emphasized the *popular* instead of the *official* war. A clever capon, he is now rewriting his novel to fit the present line, as expounded by the discerning editors of *Pravda*. He will keep his royalties, his presige, and his *dacha*. Capons, nonetheless, are notoriously sterile. Even the Central Committee has been unable to alter this fact of life.

ingly illustrates the comparative efficiency of the present regime than the success with which subversive doctrines, as distinct from mere criticism of methods and details, are kept away from the public."

IT is not, however, only or even primarily a question of efficiency of repression. Repression implies coercion from outside, which in turn implies some overt resistance. But in Russia since 1928 a much subtler form of authoritarianism has been developed: an "inner censorship" which makes the old-fashioned police-state of Nicholas or Metternich look . . . old-fashioned. For all Nicholas' efforts, his thirty-years regime saw a vigorous literary and intellectual movement which produced such figures as Pushkin, Gogol, Lermontov, Herzen, Bielinsky, Tchaadeyev, Granovsky and Bakunin. But twenty years of Stalin's rule has reduced Russian thought and literature to a Balkan level. It is not a case of subversive doctrines being "kept away from the public"; so far as one can tell, no such doctrines—and in Soviet Russia, any idea arrived at independently of the official line is deemed, *ipso facto,* subversive—are produced at all. The "inner censorship" sees to that.

Under the 19th century Czars, the Russian intelligentsia were on the offensive; they felt they had reason, justice, and the people on their side. The State bureaucrats were on the defensive; they had a bad conscience; they knew they were laughed at and widely despised; they didn't really believe in the justice or rationality of the system they enforced. Hence the mild treatment of political opposition (Vera Zasulitch, who shot the Governor of Moscow, was not only given a public trial in the regular courts but was actually acquitted, amid general rejoicing!). Hence the fact that Herzen's emigré newspaper, *Kolokol,* could be circulated by the thousands throughout Russia, and read by the highest State officials, including the Czar.

Today the situation is just the reverse: it is the artists and writers who are on the defensive, who feel guilty and absurd; and it is the bureaucrats who take the offensive because they feel that reason (historical materialism), justice and the people are on their side. Where Bielinsky criticised Nicholas' police rule, an Eisenstein or a Shostakovitch denounce . . . their own failure to conform completely to Stalin's police rule. The oppressors have a good conscience; the victims are ashamed.

In all the years that the Soviet bureaucracy has been giving orders to Russian writers, composers, film directors, artists and philosophers, there has not been a single case of open resistance. Similarly, during the Moscow Trials not one defendant found the moral courage—or, more accurately, the good conscience—to speak out against the regime that was framing him up. Not even the courageous Rakovsky, whose behavior so shook Trotsky, not even the bold Civil War commander, Muralov. In Nazi Germany during the war, Ernest Junger could write and publish *The Marble Cliffs,* a thinly disguised satire on Nazism. No such thing happened, or could conceivably happen, in Russia. Something new in the way of authoritarianism has developed there—new in the modern world at least.

The novelty comes from the fact that the Stalin group has been able to destroy *all* other competitors. In 19th

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century Russia, the State bureaucracy had to take into account both the nascent bourgeoisie and the old landed aristocracy—the "repentant nobleman" was a stock figure, from the Decembrists through Bakunin and Herzen to Count Tolstoi and Prince Kropotkin. Nor was Hitler able to eliminate the junkers and the military, as appeared in the July 20th plot against his life.

What has happened in Russia might be outlined roughly as follows: (1) the 1917 Revolution eliminated the old aristocracy and the private capitalists; by 1928 Stalin had eliminated the only competing group: the Trotsky opposition. The powerfully organized bureaucracy, controlling all the levers of economic, social and political power, then confronted only the atomized, undifferentiated masses. (2) The method of dealing with these masses was partly the old repressive police-terror system, but it had two other resources not open to the old fashioned police states: (a) effective demagogic propaganda which mobilized the pathos of the 1917 revolution and the great tradition of Marxian socialism to persuade the masses that they were the rulers and beneficiaries of the first socialist society in history; (b) the possibility of offering to the more energetic and insensitive members of the submerged masses a chance to become part of the bureaucracy themselves—the career open to talents, Pareto's free "circulation of the elite."

What has happened is that the aristocratic culture from which Herzen and Tchadaayev and Pushkin drew their strength and their ethical and artistic norms has been replaced by "popular" culture which has no norms, no taste, no sense of reason or fair-play, but is simply the mediocrity and the "practical" cynicism of the man-in-the-street raised to complete state power. It is as if the norms of Hollywood were imposed by force on all American artistic and intellectual production. Since Col.-Gen. Zhdanov and the Central Committee of the C.P. represent this level of taste and intellectual integrity better than Zostchenko or Prokofieff or Eisenstein—just as Louis B. Mayer and the National Executive Committee of the AFL represent it better than, say, William Faulkner or Alfred North Whitehead—the latter have neither a social nor a cultural base from which to draw moral courage for a struggle. They feel just as guilty and contemptible as the old Bolsheviks felt at the Moscow Trials.

The main characteristics of this kind of "official" mass culture are high quantity, low quality, and the interference of the political bureaucracy in the most intimate details of artistic creation. For quantity vs. quality, see the boxes set into this article. On the last point: this interference takes the form of periodic "purges." The one that has been going on now for almost two years represents a great advance in bureaucratic pretensions over the 1936-7 purge. *Then* it was journalists and critics who initiated the purge and elaborated its rationale (acting, of course, on orders from above); *now* it is Col.-Gen. Zhdanov, a big political boss, who personally opened the ball with an hour-long address to the writers of Leningrad (see POLITICS, Oct. 1946). *Then* it was the music critic of *Pravda* who took the composers to task; *now* it is the Central Committee of the Communist Party which issues a decree (printed elsewhere in this issue) about technical points of musical theory. The most influential Russian literary magazine today is *Culture and Life,* which the Central Committee itself recently founded "to promote criticism of deficiencies in ideological work." The Committee also promoted, after Zhdanov's speech, a new philosophical organ: *Questions of Philosophy,* complete with a masthead motto: "TO MASTER MARXIST-LENINIST THEORY MEANS TO KNOW HOW TO DEVELOP AND ADVANCE IT."—STALIN. Thus the logic of bureaucratized culture has been carried to its climax, far beyond the simple censorship of Nicholas, all the way to the direct control by a purely political body—the Central Committee of the Communist Party—of esthetic technique as well as content. A culture has developed—or rather, an anti-culture—in which Col.-Gen. Zhdanov is the most influential literary critic, and Marshal Stalin the most important philosopher. This, I think, is something new in the world.

Quantity vs. Quality (3): The Press

Pravda recently boasted that since 1917 the Russian press has grown from 884 newspapers with a total circulation of less than 3 million to 7,163 with a circulation of over 31 million. This growth was said to be "the clearest index of true freedom of the press." *Pravda*'s definition of freedom of the press: "Every line in our newspapers and journals must be devoted to Bolshevik propaganda."

What this means in practice may be shown by one example: in April and May of last year, both *Pravda* and *Izvestia* devoted an average of one-fourth of their total space to letters and resolutions from *kolkhozes* and factory collectives promising to overfulfill the current "Stalin Plan." (Even the Five Year Plan is now so called, in servile flattery of the *Vozhd,* in a single issue of *Pravda* there were seventy-three (73) salutes to the wisdom and greatness of Stalin.) On some days, as much as three-fourths of the papers were devoted to these ceremonial bows.*

This kind of thing is common practice in Soviet newspapers. Remember, also, that both *Pravda* and *Izvestia* have only four pages—24 columns—as against, for example, today's *N. Y. Times* (June 12,), which has 13 full pages devoted to news and editorials (104 columns), excluding ads, sports, stock market reports, and shipping news. Remember, furthermore, that whereas the *Times* prints complete texts on all important statements, whether by the NAM, President Truman, Marshal Stalin or Henry Wallace, *Pravda* and *Izvestia*—whose line and contents are simply reproduced in all the other 7,161 papers—as a matter of course allocate such space as is left after the Stalinsk (formerly Omsk) ball-bearing plant collective has explained in detail its Bolshevik resolution to produce twice as many ball-bearings next year as last (not forgetting its unanimous admiration and gratitude for the genius of the greatest ball-bearing maker of all, Comrade Stalin)—these papers allocate the remaining space on strictly ideological lines. Thus—a recent instance—*Pravda* gave two columns to Henry Wallace's reply to Truman's March 17 message to Congress, but only four sentences to the message itself.

Facts like these should be remembered when partyliners like Wallace or George Seldes complain about the unfairness and unreliability of the American press. That there is unfairness is perfectly true. But in both quantity and quality of news, the American press is incomparably superior to the Russian. The most cynical Hearst editor has yet to come near that slanting and suppressing of news which is a matter of course throughout Russia. "Every line in our newspapers and journals must be devoted to Bolshevik propaganda."

* *Figures from Allan Dane's "The Iconology of Stalinism" in* The New Leader *for January* 31, 1948.

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USSR: A Layman's Reading List

DWIGHT MACDONALD

The purpose of this list is to suggest to the general reader, who is presumed to be neither a specialist nor an ignoramus, some books which will give him a reasonably accurate impression of the present social and political system of Soviet Russia. The list is limited to books in English. Its purpose is an understanding of Soviet Russia as it exists today, *so that books on past periods are included only insofar as they give a needed background. Its emphasis is on the human aspects of the Soviet system rather than on statistics and theory— i.e., in academic language, on sociology, psychology, ethics and esthetics rather than on politics, economics, and history. It is, finally, a* critical *bibliography; most bibliographies are useless to the general reader because, for the sake of scholarly completeness, they include so much unreadable junk; the titles listed here, with a few duly noted exceptions, are of books which it is actually possible to read.*

Most books on Soviet Russia are either strongly Anti or strongly Pro; only the economists (see BAYKOV, BERGSON, BIENSTOCK, HUBBARD below) seem able to view matters with true scholarly indifference. This is understandable, since things have been done in the name of a great idea which appear either heroic or horrible depending on the values of the observer. This fact presents a problem to the conscientious compiler of a Reading List. He may solve it in conventional academic style by balancing off the Pro titles against the Anti titles—so many pages by Trotsky against so many by the Webbs; the implication is that (a) both Pro and Anti represent untenable extremes, and (b) the truth lies just about in between the two. This method, never justifiable, gives especially weird results when applied to Russia. For no synthesis is possible between the critics and the defenders; the charges are too monstrous and the claims are too sweeping. Therefore, I have adopted another solution to the problem: I have selected according to my own values. I don't pretend to be "objective" about Stalinism any more than I was about Nazism; on the basis of considerable study and thought—and, in the case of the former, a little first-hand experience—I have long since concluded that these totalitarian formations represent pretty much the opposite of what I believe to be good and true. The indulging of this conviction was all the more easy in that only the Anti books achieve some intellectual level, the Pro books being almost without exception of a crudely apologetic nature. The reason for this sharp division is that the Soviet Myth is one of the great ideological impostures of all time, comparable only to the claim of the Roman Catholic Church to represent the teachings of Christ. Soviet Russia is indeed, as Ciliga says, the country of the big lie, a land where the official statements not only do not coincide with the reality but are generally the very reverse of it, where the most atrocious acts are committed in the name of the noblest ideals. Hence the low quality of the Pro books.

What is a Pro book? Let me suggest a pocket Geiger-counter for use in doubtful cases. A Pro book is one which either "explains away" or says nothing at all about the following: the forced-collectivization famines of 1932-3; *the Moscow Trials and the* 1937-8 *mass purges; the* 1939-40 *invasion of Finland; the forced-labor camp system; the culture purges of* 1936-7 *and* 1946-8; *the mass deportation of Poles in* 1940, *and the execution of the Jewish socialist leaders, Erlich and Alter; the widening gap between the living standards of the masses and the bureaucratic elite. By these criteria, all the systematic surveys of Soviet Russia are Pro books—the Webbs, A. R. Williams, W. M. Mandel, E. J. Simmons, B. J. Stern, to name the leading ones. This is one reason for the appalling ignorance of the younger generation about Russia; as usual, the Stalinoids have been more assiduous in propagating their myth than the critics have been in debunking it. Koestler's chapters on the Soviet Myth in* The Yogi and the Commissar *are excellent, but too brief to be used as a general text. Clearly, there is a current necessity for a survey as elaborate as Williams'* The Soviets, *but drawn up critically, with an eye on the facts instead of on the official propaganda.*

In making the following list, I looked through the collections of the N. Y. Public Library and the Library of Congress. Although I spent a good many days on the job, I was naturally unable to go beyond the title of most of the thousands of books that by now have accumulated on the subject—sometimes, it seemed as though every one who had ever visited Russia had written a book about it! No doubt I have passed over some valuable books, or failed to give them sufficient emphasis. This Reading List will be re-issued, in a revised form, in the Fall. I should be most grateful if readers would send in criticisms and suggestions.

Finally, let me call attention to a useful and little-known source of current first-hand material: Soviet Press Translations, *published* 18 *times a year by the Far Eastern Institute of the University of Washington (Seattle* 5, *Wash.;* $10 *a year). This periodical presents the complete texts, in English, of important articles from the Soviet press.*

D.M.

List A: 25 Basic Books

BIENSTOCK, G., SCHWARZ, S. M., and YUGOW, A.: *Management in Russian Industry and Agriculture.* Oxford, 1944, 198 pp.
The definitive study. Chapter on plant managers specially important because it demonstrates statistically the rise of a new bureaucratic class.

BLUNDEN, Godfrey: *A Room on the Route.* Lippincott, 1947, 327 pp.
A novel about life in Moscow during the war, by an Australian journalist. Gives the atmosphere in moving and dramatically effective terms.

BORKENAU, Franz: *World Communism.* Norton, 1939, 442 pp.
Still the best and most comprehensive history of the Third International. The theory and the history of postwar revolutionary politicking in Germany, China, Spain, Britain, the colonies, etc.

CILIGA, Anton: *The Russian Enigma—Ten Years in the Country of the Great Lie.* Routledge, London, 1940, 304 pp.
The experiences in Russia of a former Yugoslav Communist leader, who was among the first to see through Trotskyism as well as Stalinism. Important as theory as well as testament. Deals with period of First Five-Year Plan.

COUNTS, George S., and LODGE, Nucia P. (Translators): *"I Want to Be Like Stalin."* John Day, 1947, 150 pp.
Key chapters from a textbook, by Yesipov and Goncharov, currently used in Russian normal schools. Conclusive evidence on the nature of "the new Soviet man"—at least in the calculations of his would-be manufacturers. Counts' introduction and the "Rules for Schoolchildren" at the end are specially noteworthy.

DALLIN, David J.: *The Real Soviet Russia.* Yale, 1944, 260 pp.
The best general survey of present-day USSR, in point of scholarship and documentation. Systematically covers every

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phase, from class structure to foreign policy. Dallin combines some of the virtues of journalism and scholarship.

ELIOT, T. S. (preface): *The Dark Side of the Moon.* Scribner, 1947, 299 pp.
What the Russians did to the Poles between 1939 and 1942: the mass arrests, the deportations, the life (and death) of some two million Poles in Soviet labor camps. The anonymous author, who writes extremely well and organizes her material brilliantly, has drawn on scores of first-hand narratives. Pages 3-21 are as good an introduction to the "Russian question" as I know of.

FISCHER, Markoosha: *My Lives in Russia.* Harper, 1944, 269 pp.
Sensitive and shrewdly observed personal story of a mother and housewife in Russia. By the wife of Louis Fischer.

GIDE, Andre: *Return from the USSR.* Knopf, 1937, 94 pp.
Notes on the trip that disillusioned Gide with "the Soviet experiment." A great deal of meaning in a very few pages. Gide's "Afterthoughts", published following year, are also worth reading.

GLIKSMAN, Jerzy: *Tell the West.* Gresham Press, 1948. 328 pp.
Most revealing book on Russia for many years. The story, told without dramatics and in terrible detail, of just what happened to one Polish deportee in the Siberian labor camps. Gliksman is half-brother of Victor Alter, the Polish left socialist leader executed by Stalin in 1942. He is also a remarkable observer.

GRIFFITH. Ernest S. (ed.): *Communism in Action—a Documented Study and Analysis of Communism in Operation in the Soviet Union.* Government Printing Office, 1946, 141 pp. (Obtainable for 25c from Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. Ask for it under: House Document, No. 754, 79th Congress, 2d Session.)
A first-class survey and reference work, prepared by the staff of the Library of Congress. Scholarly, objective, covers whole political, social, and economic development. Also quite dull, naturally.

HUBBARD, Leonard E.: *Soviet Labor and Industry.* Macmillan, 1942, 314 pp.
Still the best general survey. A mine of reliable data. Hubbard lived years in Russia, uses Soviet sources, is cool, detached, critical. He has also written books on Soviet trade, finance and agriculture (see below).

KOESTLER, Arthur: *The Yogi and the Commissar.* Macmillan, 1945, 247 pp.
The exigencies of commercial publishing have buried in this book of miscellaneous essays the best short pamphlet yet written about the Russian myth. Namely, the hundred pages (117-217) in which Koestler, with his usual clarity and incisiveness, demonstrates, by assembling the basic data—largely from Soviet sources—in each sphere from education to forced labor and family relations, the real nature of the Soviet system.

KOLARZ, Walter: *Stalin and Eternal Russia.* Lindsay Drummond, London, 1944, 144 pp.
Seven richly allusive and learned essays on the historical roots of Soviet nationalism. Perhaps the best of the books now emphasizing the continuity between pre—and post—1917 Russia.

KRAVCHENKO, Victor: *I Chose Freedom.* Scribner, 1946, 496 pp.
The Soviet system as seen from the top; Kravchenko was a high industrial executive. Despite the cheap melodramatic style and the phoney reconstruction of long-past conversations (both probably due to the ghost writer), the book is detailed and convincing. Chapters on the 1937-8 purge, the labor camps and the 1933 famine are especially important.

LEHRMAN, Hal: *Russia's Europe.* Appleton-Century, 1947, 341 pp.
A newspaperman's experiences in "covering" Eastern Europe, mostly Yugoslavia, in 1945-6. Badly written (it sounds like a scrapbook of NANA feature stories), it is worth reading for two reasons: (1) its first-hand factual reports on the Communization of the Balkans; (2) its honest depiction of how an ardent *PM*-nik (Lehrman went out originally for *PM*, which killed his stuff when it became critical) was converted, simply by the use of his ears and eyes, into a "red-baiter."

MAYNARD, Sir John: *Russia in Flux.* Macmillan, 1948, 564 pp.
A skillful abridgement of two books published in England in London in 1941-2: "Russia in Flux" and "The Russian Peasant." Studies in the social and cultural history of Russia since 1800; mostly on the post-1917 period. Style is discursive, organization is rambling, references are lacking, and viewpoint is excessively tolerant in the lukewarm British manner. But an important book because of its enormous range (everything from Bielinsky to the 1936 Constitution), the richness of Maynard's knowledge, and the many suggestive ideas he throws out. No good for beginners but illuminating for those with some background.

PEOPLE'S COMMISSARIAT OF JUSTICE OF THE USSR: *Report of Court Proceedings,* (1) *In the Case of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite Terrorist Centre* (*Moscow,* 1936, 180 *pp.*); (2) *In the Case of the Anti-Soviet Trotskyite Centre* (*Moscow,* 1937, 580 *pp.*); (3) *In the Case of the Anti-Soviet "Bloc of Rights and Trotskyites"* (*Moscow,* 1938, 800 *pp.*).
The official records of the Moscow Trials. (1) consists of extracts from the trial of Zinoviev, Kamenev et al.; (2) is stated to be the complete court record of the trial of Pyatakov, Radek, Sokolnikov, Muralov et al.; (3) is the same for Bukharin, Rykov, Yagoda, Krestinsky, Rakovsky et al. The testimony of Radek and Bukharin, especially the latter, is the most significant.

ROSENBERG, Arthur: *A History of Bolshevism, from Marx to the First Five Year Plan.* Oxford, 1935, 250 pp.
Still the best, and almost the only, thing of its kind. Emphasis is on policies, internal conflicts, leading ideas. A politically sophisticated study, by a historical scholar who knows how to write.

SHUB, David: *Lenin, a Biography.* Doubleday, 1948, 438 pp.
A formidable job of scholarly muckraking. No book in English has its rich documentation (drawn entirely from Russian sources) on Lenin's career. Poorly written, badly organized, and of little interest as a political interpretation, Shub's book is nonetheless of capital importance for the tremendous amount of new and sensational material it presents. Viewpoint is Menshevik.

SOUVARINE, Boris: *Stalin—a Critical Survey of Bolshevism.* Alliance, 1939, 690 pp.
The most important collection of data, from original sources, on Stalin's career and the post-1917 Bolshevik party. By a former leader of the French Communists. The American edition unfortunately omits the references, which occupy 30 pages of small type in the French edition.

TCHERNAVIN, Vladimir V.: *I speak for the Silent.* Hale, Cushman & Flint, Boston, 1935, 368 pp.
First-hand account of industrial management and prison-camp life during the first Five Year Plan. One of the best of the "I-was-there" books ever written. Tchernavin, an engineer, escaped abroad from the camp where he was imprisoned for "wrecking."

TIMASHEFF, Nicholas S.: *The Great Retreat—the Growth and Decline of Communism in Russia.* Dutton, 1946, 470 pp. plus a lengthy analytical bibliography.
Presents a theory with much learning and fascinating documentation. The theory: that Russian Communism began, in 1935, a "great retreat" from Utopian ideals toward the status quo of the last century. Apart from the theory, the book is an erudite and readable review of every field of Soviet life since 1917. Timasheff writes from a conservative Catholic viewpoint.

TROTSKY, Leon: *The Revolution Betrayed.* Doubleday, 1937, 308 pp.
A lucid critique of the "general line" of Stalin's policies;

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the definitive exposition of Trotsky's attitude. Chapters on the army, family life, labor, economic policy, etc.

UTLEY, Freda: *The Dream We Lost.* John Day, 1940, 371 pp. Covers 1932-1936 period. Partly an excellent study of economic policy and of labor exploitation; partly the story of Utley's own life in Russia, as the wife of an engineer who was "purged." Latter has just been re-issued separately by the Fireside Press, Philadelphia, under the title: "Lost Illusion."

SUGGESTED READING ORDER OF THE ABOVE BOOKS:

1. *the two general surveys: Koestler and Dallin.*
2. *four books on Russia today: Gliksman, Counts, Blunden, Lehrman.*
3. *the histories: Rosenberg, Borkenau, Shub, Souvarine.*
4. *theoretical interpretations: Trotsky, Timasheff.*
5. *the first-hand narratives, in chronological order: Tchernavin, Ciliga, Utley, Gide, Fischer, Kravchenko, Eliot.*
6. *the Soviet economy: Bienstock and Hubbard.*
7. *transcripts of the Moscow Trials.*
8. *two "historical continuity" books: Kolarz and Maynard.*
9. *to bring things together and suggest further exploration: Griffith.*

List B: Selected Books, by Topics

This list includes all the 25 books in List A, so it may be used independently. It also includes numerous other titles which, because of their specialized nature or for other reasons, are not included in List A.

1. Bibliography

Any one who wants to investigate any aspect of the USSR should know about Philip GRIERSON's invaluable *Books on Soviet Russia, 1917-1942—a Bibliography and a Guide to Reading* (Methuen, London, 1943, 354 pages, Index). This includes all books in English up to 1942, arranged by topics and each of them described briefly. It is an intelligent and thorough job, useful to the general reader as well as to the specialist.

2. General Surveys

Except for DALLIN, GRIFFITH, and KOESTLER (see List A above), these are mostly party-line affairs and hence untrustworthy. Best place to get the official line on Russia is Albert Rhys WILLIAMS' *The Soviets* (Harcourt, 1937), a huge compendium of glad tidings and impressive statistics arranged under subject headings. Even huger is Beatrice and Sidney WEBB's two-volume *Soviet Communism: A New Civilization* (Longmans Green, 1935), an academic work compiled entirely and uncritically from official hand-outs; the learned authors share the bureaucratic mentality of the Kremlin, which recognizes only slogans and paper-work as real. Frederick L. SCHUMAN's *Soviet Politics at Home and Abroad* (Knopf, 1946) is a neo-Stalinist survey, that is, its author admits practically everything and justifies it, in turgid surges of clotted prose, as necessary and even praiseworthy; Schuman's books are middlebrow popularizations, worked up from secondary sources. More orthodox is *USSR-A Handbook* (Cornell, 1947) a compliation edited by Ernest J. SIMMONS and written by such familiar stand-bys as Corliss Lamont, Harriet L. Moore, Vladimir Kazakevitch,—and Prof. Schuman.

3. History

Probably the most useful one-volume history of Russia is that by Sir Bernard PARES (Knopf, 1947), which is not saying very much. B. H. SUMNER's *A Short History of Russia* (Reynal & Hitchcock, 1943) is more interesting, but not so good as a reference work because it is arranged thematically rather than chronologically.

The Revolutionary Period (1914-1921):

Not so well known as they should be are four remarkable collections of contemporary speeches, resolutions, decrees, manifestoes, newspaper articles: (1) *The Bolsheviks and the World War; the Origin of the Third International* edited by O. H. GANKIN and H. H. FISHER (Hoover War Library Publication No. 15, Stanford U. Press, 1940), which covers the history of Bolshevism from 1900 to 1918. (2) *Documents of Russian History,* 1914-1917, edited by Frank A. GOLDER (Century, 1927). (3) *The Bolshevik Revolution,* 1917-1918, edited by James BUNYAN and H. H. FISHER (Stanford U. Press, 1934). (4) *Intervention, Civil War and Communism in Russia, April-December* 1948, edited by James BUNYAN (Johns Hopkins Press, 1936).

The two standard histories of the revolution itself are those by William H. CHAMBERLIN (Macmillan, 1935, 2 vols.) and Leon TROTSKY (Simon & Schuster, 1932, 3 vols.); former is objective, latter needs to be used, alas, with caution. Victor SERGE's *The Year One of the Russian Revolution* carries Trotsky's narrative through 1918; it was published in Paris, is now being translated serially in *The New International.* John REED's *Ten Days that Shook the World* (originally published 1919, reissued in Modern Library, 1935) tells the story of October from the Bolshevik point of view. For anarchist criticism see: Emma GOLDMAN's *My Disillusionment in Russia* (Doubleday, 1923) and *My Further Disillusionment in Russia* (Doubleday, 1924—this second book was necessary because, through some mixup, the first omitted the last 12 chapters; it could only happen to an anarchist), Alexander BERKMAN's *The Bolshevik Myth: My Diary,* 1920-1922 (Boni & Liveright, 1925), and G. P. MAXIMOFF's *The Guillotine at Work* (Berkman Fund, Chicago, 1940).

Nep (1921-1928)

Best survey is perhaps Walter R. BATSELL's *Soviet Rule in Russia* (Macmillan, 1929), a large, heavily written, scholarly work. Also see: Anton KARLGREN's *Bolshevist Russia* (Allen & Unwin, London, 1927) and Theodore SEIBERT's *Red Russia* (Century, 1932). The best "personal histories" are Countess Alexandra Tolstoy's *I Worked for the Soviets* (Yale, 1934), reminiscences of Tolstoy's daughter which make curious reading in the light of the Tolstoy cult now fostered by the regime (cf., for instance, the treatment of Yasnaya Polonya), Paul Scheffer's *Seven Years in Soviet Russia* (Putnam, 1931) and Morris Gordin's *Utopia in Chains* (Houghton Mifflin, 1926), among the first of the now-it-can-be-told memoirs of former Soviet bigshots. . . . It is interesting—as showing the barbarization of Bolshevik behavior under Stalin—to compare H. H. FISHER's *The Famine in Soviet Russia*—1919-1923 (Macmillan, 1927) with its "opposite number" about the 1932-4 famine: Ewald AMMENDE's *Human Life in Russia* (Allen & Unwin, London, 1936).

The First Five-Year Plan (1928-1932):

William H. CHAMBERLIN's *Russia's Iron Age* (Little, Brown, 1934) gives the best systematic coverage of Russian life & institutions of this period. See also CILIGA (above) and Maurice HINDUS's *The Great Offensive* (Smith & Haas, 1933). And two personal histories: Andrew SMITH's *I Was a Soviet Worker* (Dutton, 1936) and *In Search of Soviet Gold* by John D. LITTLEPAGE and Demaree BESS (Harcourt, 1938).

4. Politics

Everything in this department seems to be either quite old or anti-Stalinist or both, since Stalin and his supporters have produced almost nothing on a theoretical level (they had other fish to fry, after all); nor have they been able to articulate coherent policies or even describe accurately the results of political decisions. This is because they are pragmatists of the crudest kind when it comes to theory, and because they habitually substitute propaganda and incantation for the presentation of an intelligible

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program. Stalin can say, with Christopher Wren: Si monumentum queris, circumspice—*at the famines, frame-ups, purges, labor camps, lies and brutal institutions his regime has produced so abundantly throughout Russia. The only way to understand in general terms, therefore, what Stalin's policies are is through the writings of his opponents.*

I. Theory

The theory of Bolshevism is best expressed in LENIN's long pamphlet, *What Is To Be Done?* (1902; translated in Vol. 4 of the "Selected Works," International Publishers, 1929, pp. 89-257). This, the only original contribution of Lenin to Marxist theory, boldly denies that the workingclass can make its own revolution and therefore advances a Jacobin solution: the formation of a centralized, strictly disciplined, elite party of "professional revolutionaries." See also Rosa LUXEMBURG's critique of this pamphlet in the *Neue Zeit* (1904), and Max EASTMAN's brilliant book, *Marx, Lenin and the Science of Revolution.* Two other pamphlets by LENIN are of theoretical importance: *State and Revolution* (1918; translation, International, 1932), which outlines a semi-anarchist Utopia every principle of which was violated as soon as Lenin got into power; and *"Left-Wing" Communism: an Infantile Disorder* (1920; translation, International, 1934).

For critiques of 1917-8 Bolshevist policy which have turned out to be tragically prescient, see Bertrand RUSSELL's *Bolshevism: Practice and Theory* (Harcourt, 1920), and two pamphlets: Rosa LUXEMBURG's *The Russian Revolution* (Workers Age, 1938, with an excellent introduction by Bertram D. Wolfe, the translator) and the Menshevik, J. MARTOV's brilliant *The State and the Socialist Revolution* (International Review, 1938).

The best statement of the theory of bureaucratic collectivism—i.e., an economic system which is neither capitalist nor socialist—is Rudolf HILFERDING's brief article, *State Capitalism or Totalitarian State Economy* (translation in *Modern Review* for June, 1947). An important question of social-economic theory was raised by *The Teaching of Economics in the Soviet Union,* an article in the Russian journal, *Under the Banner of Marxism,* No. 7-8, 1943. (Complete text in *American Economic Review,* Sept. 1944; also see comments by various economists in same magazine for Sept., June, and Dec. 1944; March and Sept. 1945; also C. B. Hoover in *Foreign Affairs,* July 1944, and Peter Meyer in *Politics,* June 1944.)

Joseph STALIN has written a number of "theoretical" works under the titles: *Theory and Practice of—, Problems of—,* and *Foundations of Leninism.*

II. Practice:

The histories of Bolshevik practice are described in List A above: SHUB, SOUVARINE, ROSENBERG. As has TROTSKY's *The Revolution Betrayed,* a companion piece to which is Victor SERGE's *Russia, Twenty Years After* (Hillman-Curl, 1937). Three other works by TROTSKY are of importance for the understanding of Stalinist political practice between 1923 and 1929. *The New Course* (1923; translation, New International 1943; Max Shachtman's lengthy postscript, which is longer than Trotsky's book and is bound in with it, is a suggestive tentative attempt at a theory of Stalinism). *The Real Situation in Russia* (Harcourt, 1928) and *The Third International after Lenin* (1928; translation, Pioneer, 1936) are the complementary products of Trotsky's last gigantic effort to turn back the tide of Stalinism, the former being a critique of Stalin's domestic program and the latter of his international policies.

A useful selection of STALIN's writings is *Stalin's Kampf,* edited by M. R. Werner (Howell, Soskin, 1940).

5. Economics and Labor

For some reason—perhaps the increasing paucity of Government statistics—there is no up-to-date book on Soviet economics. Most nearly so is Aaron YUGOW's *Russia's Economic Front for War and Peace* (Harper, 1942), a mass of half-digested data. The most useful books are those of Leonard E. HUBBARD, which are critical, objective, authoritative and reasonably well written: *Soviet Money & Finance* (Macmillan, 1936), *Soviet Trade & Distribution* (Macmillan, 1938), and *The Economics of Soviet Agriculture* (Macmillan, 1939). Most detailed study is Alexander BAYKOV's *The Development of the Soviet Economic System* (Macmillan, 1946), which goes up to 1930 only; wretchedly organized and written, lacking both insights and generalizations, it is useful chiefly for reference. Also worth mentioning are Boris BRUTZKUS' *Economic Planning in the Soviet Union* (Macmillan, 1946) and Calvin B. HOOVER's *The Economic Life of Soviet Russia* (Macmillan, 1931).

Still the best short view of how the workers have fared in their fatherland is M. YVON's *What Has Become of the Russian Revolution?* (International Review, 1937); written by a French socialist who spent years in the USSR as a worker, this gives unique data on food, rent, wages, personal liberty, class differences, etc. Manya GORDON's large book, *Workers Before and After Lenin* (Dutton, 1941) tries to show that the Russian workers are worse off under Stalin than they were under the Czars; the thesis is not absurd, but the book is so lacking in structure and direction as to be simply a scrapbook which could supply the raw material for a book. Abram BERGSON's *The Structure of Soviet Wages: A Study in Socialist Economics* (Harvard, 1944) is a competent technical study whose main point is that there was a considerable increase in inequality of wages between 1928 and 1934; especially interesting chapter: "Soviet Equalitarianism, a Critique." For BIENSTOCK, see List A above.

6. Culture

There are two good general surveys covering everything from music and ballet to literature. Rene FULOP-MULLER's *The Mind and Face of Bolshevism: an Examination of Cultural life in Soviet Russia* (Putnam, 1927) is a critical study of the early "ultra-left" period, 1917-1925, done in the grand Germanic manner; it is a mine of fascinating first-hand material, especially the copious illustrations. Kurt LONDON's *Seven Soviet Arts* (Yale, 1938), also written from material gathered first-hand in Russia, is a detailed narrative of the 1930-1936 period of State intervention and "socialist realism"; every field is covered systematically, if none too imaginatively.

Literature:

Much the best general survey is Gleb STRUVE's excellent *Soviet Russian Literature* (Routledge, London, 1935), which considers all the leading writers at length and has chapters on poetry, literary criticism, the historical novel, Government policy, etc. For current data, see George REAVEY's *Soviet Literature Today* (Yale, 1947), which is on a low intellectual level and naively uncritical, but which gives a great deal of concrete information about what has been going on for the past seven years; Reavey is an Englishman who collected the material during a wartime mission in Russia; he is a good reporter. Also worth reading are chapters IV and V of Vol. 2 of Paul MILIUKOV's *Outlines of Russian Culture* (U. of Pennsylvania Press, 1942).... For the official line on literature see Maxim GORKY's *Culture and the People* (International, 1939). The best critique of this line is still Max EASTMAN's *Artists in Uniform* (Knopf, 1934), which, beside showing brilliantly and movingly the general meaning of the Stalinist cultural line, also contains important information. Somewhere in between Gorky and Eastman is Leon TROTSKY's *Literature and Revolution* (International, 1925), which was written as a protest against the reduction of literature to politics but which incidentally reveals that Trotsky himself, as a Bolshevik, went farther in that direction than he was aware; most important chapters are the first and the last three, where a general theory of the relationship of culture to social revolution is expounded.

The most up-to-date and informing book on scientific ac-

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tivity and life in Russia is Eric ASHBY's *Scientist in Russia,* just put out by Penguin at 25c. Broader than its title, it gives a detailed account of education and the whole intellectual atmosphere as well. Ashby, who spent 1945 in Russia on a scientific mission for the Australian government, is sympathetic to the regime but no party-liner.

7. Foreign Policy

Three books pretty well cover the history of Soviet foreign policy: (1) Louis FISHER's *The Soviets in World Affairs* (Cape & Smith, 1930, 2 vols.), which takes it from 1917 to 1929; Fischer gives much valuable material from original sources, draws on his own intimate connections with Soviet big shots. (2) Max BELOFF's *The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia* (Oxford, 1947), of which the first volume only has appeared, covering 1929-1936; scholarly, dullish, special attention to the Far East. (3) David J. DALLIN's *Soviet Russia's Foreign Policy,* 1939-1942 (Yale, 1942), which should be read in connection with the U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT's *Nazi-Soviet Relations,* 1939-1941: *Documents from the Archives of the German Foreign Office* (obtainable from the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C., for $1).

Other books worth reading are: BORKENAU (see List A); LEHRMAN (see List A); T. A. TARACOUZIO's *War and Peace in Soviet Diplomacy* (Macmillan, 1940), an extremely critical study of the Soviet attitude toward war, in the light of the Nazi-Soviet Pact; and W. G. KRIVITSKY's *In Stalin's Secret Service* (Harper, 1939), memoirs by a former chief of Soviet military intelligence in Western Europe which give an "inside" view of Kremlin policy in the Red Army purge of 1938, the Spanish civil war, etc.

8. The Forced Labor Camps

What strikes one on reviewing the literature on Soviet forced labor (i.e., slavery) is not only its copiousness but also the antiquity of much of it. Twenty years ago the facts began to leak out, but most of us for years pooh-poohed the revelations as bourgeois slander, and some of us still resist enlightenment. Such is the power of the Soviet Myth. Chronologically arranged, the most important texts are:

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR POLITICAL PRISONERS: *Letters from Russian Prisons* (A. & C. Boni, 1925). A collection of first-hand experiences by political opponents of the Bolsheviks, made by a group of liberals headed by Roger Baldwin. Prefatory endorsements by, among others, Romain Rolland and Thomas Mann.

V. BRUNOVSKY: *The Methods of the GPU* (Harper, 1931). Prison and camp memoirs of an ex-bigshot; detailed and convincing; year: 1923.

Roger BALDWIN: *Liberty under the Soviets* (Vanguard, 1928). Survey of civil liberties, as of 1927; friendly, though not uncritical. Interesting (and depressing) to compare with situation 20 years later.

Bernard PARES (ed.): *Out of the Deep—Letters from Soviet Labor Camps* (Geoffrey Bles, London, 1933). Letters from German colonists deported to Siberia as kulaks in 1930-1932.

Vladimir V. TCHERNAVIN: *I Speak for the Silent* (see List A above).

Tatiana TCHERNAVIN: *Escape from the Soviets* (Dutton, 1934). Narrative of V. Tchernavin's wife; year: 1930.

Ivan SOLONEVICH: *The Soviet Paradise Lost* (Paisley Press, 1938) and *Escape from Russian Chains* (Williams & Norgate, London, 1938). Although author later accepted Nazism as an ally against Stalinism, his books are intelligent, closely observed reports on the prison-camp system.

Maurice EDELMAN: *GPU Justice* (Allen & Unwin, London, 1938). Personal history of Peter Kleist, a German engineer arrested by GPU on usual sabotage charges and later released. Friendly to regime; worth reading to see the best case that can be made out for the Soviet penal system.

T. S. ELIOT (preface): *The Dark Side of the Moon* (see List A above).

Jerzy GLIKSMAN: *Tell the West* (see List A above).

David J. DALLIN and Boris I. NICOLAEVSKY: *Forced Labor in Soviet Russia* (Yale, 1947). Definitive work on the Soviet labor camp system: maps, statistical estimates (7 to 15 millions now in camps), descriptions by survivors, history, bibliography. From Russian sources; much new material.

9. The Moscow Trials

For the Kremlin's side, see the official court records (under PEOPLE'S COMMISSARIAT OF JUSTICE, in List A above), to which add *The Crime of the Zinoviev Opposition: the Assassination of S. M. Kirov* (Cooperative Publishing Society of Foreign Workers in the USSR, Moscow, 1935) for information on the *first* Zinoviev-Kamenev arrest immediately after Kirov's murder. Also: J. STALIN's *Wrecking, Espionage and Terrorism in the USSR* (Anglo-Russian Parliamentary Committee, London, 1937), speeches delivered to the Central Committee of the CPSU in 1937, and J. R. CAMPBELL's *Soviet Policy and its Critics* (Gollancz, London, 1939), a carefully reasoned defense of the party line on the Trials, unique in that it is not merely propaganda and abuse but really tries to argue the Stalinist case.

The major critical expose of the Trials is: *The Case of Leon Trotsky—Report of Hearings on the Charges Made against Him in the Moscow Trials* by the commission headed by John DEWEY (Harper, 1937). Of the many pamphlets showing the contradictions and falsifications of the trials, the best seem to me to be Friedrich ADLER's *The Witchcraft Trial in Moscow* (Pioneer, 1937), Francis HEISLER's *The First Two Moscow Trials* (Socialist Party USA, 1937), and Max SHACHTMAN's *Behind the Moscow Trial* (Pioneer, 1936). The most plausible political explanation of why the trials took place is to be found in the anonymous *Letter of an Old Bolshevik* (Rand School, 1937). The most plausible "why did they confess?" explanations are those by Leon TROTSKY in the articles he wrote at the time for the *N. Y. Times* and by Arthur KOESTLER in his novel, *Darkness at Noon* (Macmillan, 1941); they contradict each other at most points.

10. Sex, Family, Education

It is notable that on these decisive aspects of the human quality of life in Russia, practically all the books are at least fifteen years old. Life in Russia since 1935 *has become so grim, the institutions have become so frankly reactionary, that the pro-Stalinists don't dare and even the critics don't have the heart to look too closely at what has happened. And, anyway, the rulers of Russia just don't let anybody in to poke around any more. Hence the dearth—significant in itself—of such books.*

On the "woman question", the following three books—all dealing with 1932 or earlier—are the most important:

Wilhelm REICH: *The Sexual Revolution* (1936; translation, Orgone Institute Press, 1945). Traces the degeneration of the Russian revolution to the Bolsheviks' inability to substitute a free and natural ("sex-economic") sexual code for the authoritarian, repressive conventions of the past. A bold thesis, ridden hard.

Ella WINTER: *Red Virtue* (Harcourt, 1933). On education, family life and sexual mores under the first Five Year Plan. Winter, active in the American Communist movement, is naturally popeyed with enthusiasm, but is still enough of a journalist to give a lot of fascinating information.

Fanina HALLE: *Woman in Soviet Russia* (Viking, 1933). Also party-line stuff, also full of useful material.

The best survey on education between 1917 and 1929 is *Educational Policy in Soviet Russia,* by Nikolaus HANS and Serge HESSEN (P. S. King, London, 1930), an objective and well-

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documented study. For more recent data, see Eric ASHBY's *Scientist in Russia* (Penguin, 1947) and COUNTS (list A above).

11. "What's It Like, Really?"

The just-noted dearth of factual, scholarly books on contemporary Russian life does not mean it is impossible to know "what it's like." There are other approaches—personal, ethical, esthetic—beside the scientific. Books of this kind, which today offer a more fruitful way of evaluating Soviet life than the objective-scientific method (since the data on which the latter must work has been so thoroughly suppressed by the deliberate policy of the ruling class), may be divided into two categories: esthetic (novels) and personal ("I-Was-There"):

I. Novels:

I must confess to only a slight acquaintance with Soviet literature, so can only make the most inadequate suggestions. Two satirical books give a lively impression of the quality of life under the first Five Year Plan: *The Little Golden Calf*, by Ilya ILF and Eugene PETROV (Farrar & Rinehart, 1932) and Mikhail ZOSTCHENKO's *Russia Laughs* (Lothrop, Lee & Shephard, Boston, 1935).

Two things strike one on reading them: (a) the squalor of ordinary Russian life as contrasted to the bureaucratic "bluff" of slogans, directives and regulations; and (b) the fact that such freedom of satire was permitted, almost as much as the Czars allowed Gogol or Stalin's favorite, Saltykov-Schedrin. The Kremlin has failed to do anything about (a) but it has masterfully settled (b) with the recent excommunication of Zostchenko—Ilf and Petrov having evaporated years ago.

For a Western view of this period, see E.E. CUMMINGS' *Eimi* (Covici-Friede, 1933), a noble and witty expression of an unreconstructed individual's hatred of lies, conformity, propaganda and discipline—i.e., of the USSR. Also Malcolm MUGGERIDGE's *Winter in Moscow* (Eyre & Spottiswoode, London, 1934), a cruel, tender, brilliant, wry comment on Soviet life, in the Evelyn Waugh manner, cf. especially "The Ash-Blond Incorruptible." . . . For more recent times, see Arthur KOESTLER's *Darkness at Noon* (Macmillan, 1941), George ORWELL's satire on the degeneration of Bolshevism, *Animal Farm* (Harcourt, 1946) and BLUNDEN (List A, above).

II. "I-Was-There" Books:

I don't know how many journalists have gone to Russia, or how many literary tourists, or how many Russians have escaped since 1917, but, however many there may be, it would seem that every one of them has written a book about it. Most of these books, naturally, are today of slightly more interest than a copy of the N.Y. Telephone Directory for 1923. But a few of them, and not only the most recent, are still important for an understanding of Russia today.

Some have already been listed under "8. Forced-Labor Camps"; others in List A, above: CILIGA, ELIOT, FISCHER, GIDE, GLIKSMAN, KRAVCHENKO, TCHERNAVIN, and UTLEY. To these may be added—with the warning that a more thorough sifting of the material than I have been able to make would probably turn up more—the following: Edmund WILSON's *Travels in Two Democracies* (Harcourt, 1936), whose second half is a journal of travel in the USSR; Alexander BARMINE's *One Who Survived* (Putnam, 1945), memoirs of a former Soviet bigshot; John SCOTT's *Behind the Urals* (Houghton, Mifflin, 1941), by a *Time* correspondent with a neo-Stalinist bias and an excellent sense of concrete detail; Harry and Rebecca TIMBRES' *We Didn't Ask Utopia* (Prentice-Hall, 1939)—and they didn't get it either, I can't help adding—the story of an American Quaker family in Russia, honest, mild, uncritical; and John FISCHER's *Why they Behave like Russians* (Harper, 1947), an intelligent and honest evaluation of contemporary Russian life by a former UNRRA official.

THE RUSSIAN ENIGMA
by Anton Ciliga
The Russia of the first Five Year Plan
as seen by a workingclass revolutionary.
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12. Speculations

This last category contains all the books that didn't fit in anywhere else. Most of them present rather large, speculative theses, whence the heading.

Nikolai BERDIAEV's *The Origins of Russian Communism* (Godfrey Bles, London, 1937) and *The Russian Idea* (Macmillan, 1948) are the most attractive, imaginative and irritating. They are rambling, formless monologues, written in a monotonous prose style that consists almost entirely of short declarative sentences, and wheeling around the same fixed points, having to do with such vague matters as the Russian soul and Christian theology. On the other hand, Berdiaev is a shrewd and learned talker and throws off some capital insights into Russian culture and the nature of Soviet Communism.

KOLARZ, MAYNARD and TIMASHEFF are described above in List A. Also worth mention are: Hans KOHN's *Nationalism in the Soviet Union* (Routledge, London, 1933), Rudolf SCHLESINGER's *The Spirit of Postwar Russia—Soviet Ideology*, 1917-1946 (Dennis Dobson, London, 1947), and George SOLOVEYTCHIK's *Russia in Perspective* (Norton, 1947). Finally, two solid and scholarly books on Soviet law are Judah ZELITCH's *Soviet Administration of Criminal Law* (U. of Pennsylvania Press, 1931) and Rudolf SCHLESINGER's *Soviet Legal Theory: Its Social Background and Development*, which is broader than its title suggests.

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Notes on Mass Culture

Irving Howe

WHEN we glance at the pseudo-cultural amusements that occupy the American people's leisure time, we soon wonder: what happens to the anonymous audience while it consumes the products of mass culture?* It is a question that can hardly be answered systematically or definitively, for there is no way of knowing precisely what the subterranean reactions of an audience are—and it will certainly not do merely to ask it. We can only speculate, and the answer to our question, if one is to be had at all, can be found only within ourselves.

Here we meet our first difficulty: the only people who can analyze the effects of mass culture on an audience are those who reject its uncritical acceptance of mass culture. "Contaminated" by art standards, the intellectual must necessarily hesitate when he tries to decide which of his reactions to mass culture are similar to those of the audience and which are the product of his private cultivation. He may overcome this difficulty by frankly admitting to himself that, like it or not, he is part of the mass audience and is influenced by mass culture. If he is to speculate fruitfully, he must reach that precarious condition where he can identify himself with the audience's reactions while yet retaining his critical distance.

To some extent the intellectual can dispense with mass culture, though far less than he knows or is willing to admit. So long as we live in a class society, mass culture will remain indispensable even to those who have learned to scorn it; we cannot escape what is so much a part of the atmosphere in which we live. Nor would such an attempted escape be particularly desirable: the price of public experience may be a kind of contamination, but in view of the alternative it is not too high a price to pay.

1. The Unconscious Urge to Self-Obliteration

Mass culture is an urban product. Confined to the close spaces of a city, members of an industrial society must always face the disturbing problem of what to do with their leisure time, how to organize it in relation to their work day.

One thing seems certain: except during brief revolutionary intervals, the quality of leisure time activity cannot vary too sharply from that of the work day. If it did, the office or factory worker would be exposed to those terrible dualities of feeling that make it so difficult for the intellectual to adjust his job to himself. But the worker wants no part of such difficulties, he has enough already. Following the dictum of industrial society that anonymity is a key to safety, he seeks the least troublesome solution: mass culture.

Whatever its manifest content, mass culture must therefore not subvert the basic patterns of industrial life. Leisure time must be so organized as to bear a factitious relationship to working time: apparently different, actually the same. It must provide relief from work monotony without making the return to work too unbearable; it must provide amusement without insight and pleasure without disturbance—as distinct from art which gives pleasure through disturbance.

Mass culture is thus oriented towards a central aspect of industrial society: the depersonalization of the individual. On the one hand, it diverts the worker from his disturbing reduction to semi-robot status by arranging "relaxing" amusements for him. The need for such amusements explains the ceaseless and hectic quest for novelty in the mass culture industries (e.g., the "twist" in popular songs, the melodic phrase the audience remembers.) On the other hand, mass culture reinforces those emotional attitudes that seem inseparable from existence in modern society—passivity and boredom. Precisely the frenetic chase after novelty, after something new that might rise above routine experience becomes the means of molding leisure time activity according to work time patterns. What is supposed to deflect us from the reduction of our personalities actually reinforces it.

In a fascinating study, "On Popular Music,"* T. Adorno makes some remarks on the standardization of popular music that seem a specific working-out of the views expressed here:

> ". . . the harmonic cornerstone of each hit—the beginning and the end of each part—must beat out the standard scheme. . . . Complications have no consequences . . . regardless of what aberrations occur, the hit will lead back to the familiar experience, and nothing fundamentally novel will be introduced. . . . The composition hears for the listener. This is how popular music divests the listener of his spontaneity.
>
> "Boredom has become so great that only the brightest colors have any chance of being lifted out of the general drabness. Yet it is just those violent colors which bear witness to the omnipotence of mechanical, industrial production . . . the means used to overcome reality are more humdrum than reality itself.
>
> "To escape boredome and avoid effort is incompatible. . . . They seek novelty but the strain and boredom associated with actual work lead to avoidance of effort in leisure time. . . . That means boredom again. . . . "

What is true for popular music is also true for the movies. The movie theatre is like a dark cavern, a neutral womb, into whose soothing and dissolving blackness we

* As used in recent discussions, "mass culture" refers to the production of synthetic, easily accessible amusements for mass audiences, as well as to the products themselves. In mass culture the materials of art are exploited, although art works, except very rarely and that by accident, are not created. Mass culture allows art neither to thrive nor to perish, since art is at once its most dangerous competitor and its one indispensable source of "ideas."

* *Studies in Philosophy and Social Science,* Vol. IX, 1941.

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can escape from our frayed selves. In a nonreligious age, the movie theatre is one of the few places that provides a poor man with a kind of retreat, a place where he can throw off the shackles of his social responsibility, relationships and personality. Here, at least, he does not have to acknowledge his irritating self.

It is interesting to compare the movie theatre with the baseball park. In the theatre one ceases, in a sense, to exist. One seldom talks, one is seldom brought to those heights of consciousness that a genuine work of dramatic art can arouse. (Even the adolescents necking in the back rows do so with a kind of grim anonymity.) The movie house is a psychological cloakroom where one checks one's personality. But baseball, one of the few mass urban activities that seems to retain some folk spontaneity, is different. The game is so paced that one usually has enough time to return to oneself, and the entire atmosphere of the ball park allows for some spontaneity: the audience argues, eats, shouts, participates as an *independent* group that is reacting to the events on the field. As a result, one encounters a kind of rough and pleasing wit in the ball park, as well as an easy-going camaraderie. The ball park, I find, is one of the few public places where one can converse uninhibitedly with total strangers.

If only because it must conform to the psychological patterns of industrial society, mass culture is inseparably related to common experience. The notion that it concocts a never-never world of irrelevant fantasy is nonsense spread by the kind of people whose only complaint about Hollywood is that it isn't "realistic" enough. In actuality, the audience accepts both mass culture and daily experience precisely to the degree that the two blend. By now neither can be maintained without the other, which is one reason why there prevails in this country such a blurred notion of what human experience is and such an inadequate notion of what it should be.

But, it may be objected, don't the movies create atmospheres and situations totally removed from the experience of the audience? How many people are in a position to lead the kind of lives Van Johnson and Bette Davis, Ronald Colman and Ingrid Bergman portray on the screen? Precious few, of course; and if the comparison between the life of an audience and that portrayed on the screen is made simply in such formal terms, it will yield us nothing. Furthermore, there are obviously many films whose major purpose is to construct an atmosphere or environment characterized precisely by its complete irrelevance to the audience's life. But I think that the majority of films do have strong psychological contact with our lives. From the tough guy films we find so exciting because they rouse our unexpended sadism to the sophisticated comedies that play on our yearning for charm and grace, from the musical comedies that make taffy of our tensions to the socially conscious films that seek to exorcise our guilts—more movies than we know are comments on our experience and help us to "adjust" to it, that is to acquiesce in it. They may not be truthful or authentic or profound comments, but they do touch on essential aspects of our relationship both to society and ourselves. The movies help us remain at peace with ourselves by helping us to suppress ourselves.

By now daily experience and mass culture are so interlaced that it would be futile to seek causal relationships between them. Does Gregory Peck model himself after the American Lover or does the American Lover model himself after Gregory Peck? It would be hard, and unnecessary, to say. All we need know is that the relationship between mass culture and daily experience is so intimate that millions of people seem hardly able or willing to distinguish between the two. They send letters of advice to comic strip and radio characters. Little Orphan Annie has for years been receiving letters from readers that tell her how to get out of her endless difficulties. (She never seems to follow the advice.) Some years ago when the creator of "Terry and the Pirates" was rash enough to kill a favorite character, the New York Daily News was besieged with letters of complaint. And the movie magazines establish relationships between millions of American women and idealized versions of movie stars in which it is impossible to distinguish between reality and fantasy, so closely are they interwoven.

Mass culture elicits the most conservative responses from the audience. So long as the audience feels that it must continue to live as it does, it has little desire to see its passivity and deep-seated though hardly conscious boredom upset; it wants to be titillated and amused but not disturbed. For those molded in the image of contemporary society, art has many dangers: its effects are unpredictable and its demands tremendous. Art demands effort, a creative response from the audience. Joyce makes it hard for us, but he offers us the tempting possibility of reaching his heights of sensibility. But mass culture makes things "easy" and does not "upset" us; mass culture is *safe,* for its end is already present in its beginning.

A common item of experience tends to confirm these observations. When we feel vaguely upset and dissatisfied with ourselves, we "take in" a movie. If we are somewhat intellectualized, we know the movie will not provide us with the fundamental satisfactions that, say, a Dostoievsky novel might, but because of our attachment to our disturbance we are unable to summon the effort a work of art would demand. In an act of self-destructive bravado we even deliberately look for a "bad" movie; we punish ourselves for "feeling bad" by doing something that must ultimately make us feel worse. The analogy with neurosis, in which the sufferer clings to the source of his disturbance, is obvious.

2. The Dissociation of Personality

Mass culture seems always to involve a pact between medium and audience to suppress the free play of the unconscious. Where art stirs a free and rich passage of materials from dream to experience and from experience to dream, mass culture tries to cage the unconscious. It cannot of course succeed, but it does often manage to dissociate conscious from unconscious life. The audience therefore responds on two unintegrated levels: surface consciousness ("having a good time") and suppressed unconscious (the distorted evocation of experience by popular culture themes). On the surface the Donald Duck and Mickey Mouse cartoons seem merely pleasant little fictions, but they are actually overladen with the most competitive, aggressive and sadistic themes. Often on the verge of hysteria, Donald Duck is a frustrated little monster who has something of the SS man in him and whom we, also having something of the SS man in us, naturally find quite charming. . . .

This discrepancy between conscious and unconscious reactions to mass culture seems inseparable from the audi-

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ence's need for social approval. Whoever has attended a jam session or gone to the Paramount Theatre when a favorite bandleader is featured, knows how compulsive the seemingly spontaneous audience responses can be. No doubt the audience believes it is "enjoying" itself, but a central component of that enjoyment is the very powerful pressures towards social conformism. How can a bobby-soxer admit to not enjoying Vaughn Monroe?

(In fairness, it should be admitted that there is probably nothing more conformist about the mass audience's feeling that the famous bandleader or the all-star picture must be entertaining than the intellectual's analagous feeling that the great writer must be profound.)

In the comics, this dissociation of personality is taken for granted. Comic characterization consists of persistent identification of each name with an outstanding personality trait: Tillie is always the toiler, Joe Jinks always worries, Little Orphan Annie always suffers and Maggie always wants to break into society. Dissociation of personality has been institutionalized in the "balanced comic section" of the McCormick-Patterson chain:

> "The Gumps (represent) gossip, realistic family life; Harold Teen, youth; Smitty, cute-kid stuff; Winnie Winkle, girls; Moon Mullins, burly laughter; Orphan Annie, sentiment . . . Dick Tracy, adventure and the most up-to-date sophisticated type; Smilin' Jack, flying and sex." (This rather naive list is taken from a naive but useful book, *The Comics* by Colton Waugh.)

The comics further dissociate personality by erasing the distinctions between adulthood and childhood. (Popular songs revert to baby-talk to relieve adult tension.) The first comic strip in this country was "The Yellow Kid," a creature half-man and half-child, full of premature and malicious wisdom. Little Orphan Annie and Kayo are both of uncertain age, neither children nor adults, and show no sign of growing older (or younger, for that matter) in the next few decades. Harold Teen is blessed with the secret of eternal adolescence, than which his readers find little more desirable. Such strips allow adults to sink, for the moment, into the uncomplicated ways of childhood. On the other hand, the numerous comics that are little more than schematized abstractions of violence and sadism quickly push children into premature adulthood.*

Like comic strips, though seldom so simply, movie stars also tend to become identified in the mass mind with one personality strand. Their status as stars is seldom secure unless they have developed one dominant emotional characteristic which serves the audience as an identifying sign. It is this characteristic that determines the emotional essence of a movie, as distinct from the surface subject. Although "The Hucksters" was presumably a satire on advertising, it was actually about Clark Gable, the irresistible male. Every Gable film has sexual aggression as its dominant inner theme no matter what its ostensible plot. Similarly, no matter which role he plays Ronald Colman is always the man of the world. In no picture has the divergence between inner theme and apparent subject been so wide as in the film "Crossfire," which while ostensiby an attack on anti-Semitism, was actually about a tough guy who violates social convention and in passing accidentally kills a Jew.

At most, Hollywood allows several characters in a movie to represent conflicting emotional strands. Like all mass culture media, it is neither able nor interested in grouping conflicting emotions within one character. From its point of view, that would be dangerous.

3. The Unpunished Violation of Law

"Mit dose kids, society iss nix," says the Inspector about his juvenile tormentors, the Katzenjammer Kids. The adult-baiting that is the main theme of this comic strip seems never to weary its audience, since children and adults are always at war and adults often secretly sympathize with children. To children the strip appeals directly and for obvious reasons, and to adults it offers the possibility of vicariously rejecting their own adulthood and of safely breaking the laws of social life. While perpetuating passivity and shredding personality, mass culture yet allows the audience the limited freedom of vicariously breaking social law which, in turn, satisfies "a perpetual latent craving in the American psyche for physical expression, for a type of energy that humdrum factory and office jobs have no way of releasing." (Parker Tyler, *The Hollywood Hallucination.*) But even this safe violation of social law in the audience's reactions to mass culture serves ultimately to reinforce real life adherence to social law.

Krazy Kat, the one comic strip intellectuals have admitted to liking, won wide favor with mass audiences simply because Herriman satisfied this deep craving for safe violations of traditional orders. He obeyed neither the conventions of social life nor the internal requirements of his medium; he simply did what he pleased. To the audience there was something immensely gratifying when for no apparent reason the background of the strip moved while its characters remained still. The knowledge that no matter what else happened Ignatz would for no discernible reason always throw his brick was both reassuring and consoling. For once, when straphangers glanced each evening at Krazy Kat, they could escape from the tyranny of causality. In a world too cluttered with reasons, there seemed no reason for what happened to Officer Pup, Ignatz and Krazy—and this very lack of order helped the audience reestablish order in its own life.

What happens when a mass culture product does not conform to this pattern of safely violating social law I learned in a rather terrifying incident several years ago. I was then stationed at an army reception center where new recruits were prepared for military life. After they exchanged civilian for army clothes, their behavior often took a sharp turn to a kind of lawlessness, a break from old patterns. Feeling that they had to live up to a new role, they indulged in a fantastic amount of profanity and wild sexual boasting. They had to show they were men.

One evening at a showing of the film "The Ox-Bow Incident" I could not help noticing that most of the new soldiers were volubly identifying themselves with the film's lynch mob as it tracked down and murdered three innocent men. The feelings they had about their new status in life were apparently projected into sympathy for the lynchers, *also men of violence*. And they assumed that this film would allow them, as might most Hollywood products, to cheat out of the consequences of their vicarious violence.

When, however, at the end of the film the lynching was

* The idea for this paragraph has been developed from a note on the comics by Dwight Macdonald; Politics, April 1945.

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sharply condemned—not merely in formal terms but in psychic and visual images the audience could not escape—the soldiers openly jeered. They were as perplexed and disoriented as the lynchers in the movie. For once, they discovered, they could not identify themselves with the lawbreakers without suffering emotionally. And they felt that in this way the movie was "cheating" them, as in a sense it was.

The motif of unpunished violation of social law is strongly emphasized in the most important recent development in mass culture—the "tough guy" movies. When we go to see the old-fashioned detective (Sherlock Holmes, Ellery Queen) and western films, we are hardly involved emotionally; such films are put together along strictly stereotyped patterns that permit us the pleasure of relapsing into passive spectators. Their crimes and their punishments provoke no violent reactions since they concern relationships to law that no longer count. In fact, their major source of pleasure is their frank irrelevance.

But we react both violently and with some complexity to the tough guy films. (The detective film is concerned with patterns of deduction, the tough guy film with situations of existence, even if distorted ones.) When we project ourselves into the position of the tough guy who is often not quite clearly on either side of the law, our enjoyment in this identification is deep since it is so close—for does not modern life force all of us to be at least part-time tough guys? And our pleasure in the inevitable denouement is equally deep, since the greater the evil by which we have been tempted the greater our relief at escaping it. Like the Christian who views the Jew as both murderer and murdered, the spectator can gain from the tough guy film the symbiotic pleasure of being both hunter and hunted.

I think this can best be illustrated by going back to a movie made several years ago, "Double Indemnity." In this film an insurance agent named Neff is attracted by a woman, Phyllis, who lures him into a plot to kill her husband and share his insurance. In the end they are trapped by Keyes, the insurance company's claims investigator. As played by Barbara Stanwyck, Phyllis is a remarkable sexual woman: frank, aggressive, bitchy. To the spectator's mind she therefore represents lawlessness, the violation of traditional sex mores. She is what the audience might like to be or like to possess, but she is too much so to allow us readily to identify ourselves with her. Keyes, on the other hand, is a creature of sheer intelligence: the supervisory mind that investigates and punishes us for our hidden transgressions. With neither can we fully identify ourselves.

But Neff, the hapless victim in the middle, is just another little guy, as bumbling as you, I or Fred MacMurray. We could fall for Phyllis and we could be trapped by Keyes. Neff is a passive transmission belt through which runs the conflict between Phyllis and Keyes—lawless instinct versus lawful conduct. Since Neff's feelings about that conflict are as ambiguous as those of the audience itself, he is, in a sense, the audience brought directly into the film, the modern anonymous moviegoer torn between what he takes for lawless sexual desire and intelligent lawful suppression. Farther in the violation of social law, mass culture cannot go. And this, too, is the deepest identification we can feel towards a mass culture hero—an identification that, unlike a genuine work of art which brings into play a variety of emotions and character components, rests largely on the least individualized and most anonymous aspects of ourselves. The identification is ultimately with our role of social anonymity.

But this is as far as mass culture can go in the direction of art—much farther incidentally than the more pretentious or "socially significant" products of Hollywood. The next step is the crucial step, and Hollywood, like all other mass culture industries, cannot take it. Here it has reached the great divide.

BOOKS

After Seven Years

I. A Way of Death

Seven years ago, Houghton Mifflin published an illustrated book that was either a novel, a poem, an autobiography, a sociological study, a muckraking pamphlet, or a work of reportage, depending on how you wanted to take it. In the first year of publication, it sold less than 600 copies; its total sale to date has been—as near as I can fix it—something less than 4,000, the bulk of which was sold at remainder prices. The reviews were either cool or hostile almost everywhere except in *Kenyon Review* (Lionel Trilling), *The Saturday Review of Literature* (Selden Rodman), and the *Memphis (Tenn.) Times-Scimitar* (George Marion O'Donnell). Although it still enjoys some word of mouth reputation, it is rarely mentioned any longer in print, including the "little" magazines. It was, in a word, as bad a publishing failure as could be imagined: neither a commercial success nor a *succes d'estime*.

I am talking, of course, about *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, by James Agee, with photographs by Walter Evans. The book came out of an assignment to write and illustrate an article for *Fortune* about Southern sharecroppers. Agee and Evans spent two months in the South, one month living with the Gudgers, a family of sharecroppers in Alabama. *Fortune* didn't print the article after all, I don't know why but suspect because Agee's approach fitted into neither the "liberal" nor the "conservative" category, being pessimistic, unconstructive, impractical, indignant, lyrical and always personal. After a similar rebuff from Harper & Bros.*, the authors found a publisher, with the results noted above.

I find all this very curious because *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* seems to me one of the most interesting and important American books of the last fifteen years. True, it appeared at a bad time: the year that both Russia and America entered the war. Also true that so original a book could not hope for a mass circulation. But there is some audience for "experimental", "serious" writing, and

*The story is that Harpers was very enthusiastic until they saw the MS, after which a deep silence ensued. Finally one of the Big Shots wrote the authors that Harpers would print the book if certain deletions were made in the interests of "good taste." Agee and Evans replied they would gladly make the deletions on one condition: that they might reproduce, in an appendix, the complete text of the Big Shot's letter. That was the end of Harpers.

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when one sees the number of "little" literary magazines, most of them desperately serious and grimly experimental, when one sees how a feeble "highbrow" novel like, say, *Under the Volcano* is treated respectfully by even the daily reviewers, then one gets the impression that times have changed since *Moby Dick* sold only 500 copies its first year (not the only similarity with Agee's book) and all the other classic injustices. Not so. All that has happened is that the avant garde has been institutionalized, the little magazines have developed their own editorial formulae, and the highbrow audience feels the same ease in the presence of the mediocre and the same aversion to anything that breaks the familiar categories as the *Saturday Evening Post* readers. The neglect of Bartok's music until the last few years in a case in point; the reception of *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* is another.*

The book is written in a great variety of styles—I know no American writer more talented with words than Agee; his virtuosity, indeed, is often a defect, leading him farther rhetorically than his thought and emotion will carry him—from straight reporting ("At a normal price, a half-sharing tenant gets about six dollars a bale from his share of the cottonseed.") to such passages as "the slow, silent, sweet, quiet yet so profoundly piercing enlargement of the physical sensual emotional world whereof, as we have said, not the least detail whose imposture and power to trench and habituate is not intense beyond calculation." This passage seems to me very bad writing: fuzzy, turgid, pretentious, adjectival. For if Agee's book has some of the best prose of our time in it, it also has some of the worst—which also must have confused and therefore irritated the critics. An example of Agee's writing close to its best is:

"All over Alabama, the lamps are out. Every leaf drenches the touch; the spider's net is heavy. The roads lie there, with nothing to use them. The fields lie there, with nothing to work in them, neither man nor beast. The plow handles are wet, and the rails and the frogplates and the weeds betwen the ties: and not even the hurryings and hoarse sorrows of a distant train, on other roads, is heard."

The content is as varied as the style. Much of it is close, minute description which blends lyricism with naturalism in an extraordinarily effective way. Everything, literally, the Gudgers see, touch, taste and smell is described. Two pages are devoted to the texture of the unpainted boards of their house—"these wild fugues and floods of grain," and four pages to a definitive account of overalls, how they look, how they feel on the body, how they age and decay. Their shoes, hats, dresses, shirts, knives, forks, etc. etc. are all described in sensuous terms. Also sociologically, as: "The towels in such farmhouses are always floursacks. Kitchen towels are of another world and class of farmer, and 'face' and 'turkish' towels of still another."

Some of it is satire (as the section on the Gudger children's schoolbooks), some of it is savagely deadpan description of class and race relation (as the wonderful encounter with the young Negro couple outside the church, or the scene by the sawmill), much of it is devoted to Agee's personal relations with and reactions to the members of the three sharecropper families he and Evans spent most of their time with. On the last, I agree pretty much with the criticisms made by Mills below, though I'd add that much of this part is extremely good—and that, as with all artists whose work is alive, Agee's "defects" seem not only inseparable from his "virtues" but also essential to them, which is another reason the book annoyed everybody so much.

It is interesting to compare *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* with *Moby Dick*. Like Melville, Agee is telling a moral parable in terms of a specific way of "making a living" (farming, whaling). There are other similarities: the Elizabethan exuberance of rhetoric, the almost-whimsical variety of structure which packs in everything from poetic drama to drily naturalistic description, the alternation of grand romantic fortissimo passages with how-to-do-it expositions that could appear in *Fortune* if they were done less imaginatively (as Agee found out). This is not to put the two works on the same esthetic level: *Moby Dick* seems to me superior. The elements of its superiority tell us something about the degeneration of America since 1850. Melville's people are "bigger than life," they have will, consciousness, and passion, they struggle and act; but the Ricketts and the Gudgers and the Woods, as presented by Agee, are passive, beaten, without much will or consciousness, victims of life with no more ambitious aim than to keep going from day to day. Ahab's defeat is tragic, George Gudger's is only pathetic. Melville had the creative force to give his theme a dramatic form; Agee's book is a series of notes from which such a drama might be worked up but which is not fused into a whole; Melville's worldly, objective, often humorous approach also seems to me superior to Agee's oversweet, sometimes mawkishly personal manner—one feels that Melville was more at home in his sea world than Agee is among his farmers, more the actor and observer and less the self-involved victim, so that somewhat the same difference exists between the authors as between their characters.

These differences are, of course, related to the different quality of our whole life today: we are all of us trapped in an incomprehensible organization of society which denies us human satisfactions like interesting work and comradeship, and which hurries us all along in its vast mechanism to war and destruction; we are all, in Camus' phrase, either victims or executioners—until an atomic war makes us both simultaneously.

"How did we get caught?" Agee's people ask. "Why is it things always seem to go against us? Why is it there can't ever be any pleasure in living? . . . How were we caught? What, what is it has happened? What is it has been happening that we are living the way we are? The children are not the way it seemed they might be: She is no longer beautiful. . . . How was it we were caught?"

The great thing about Agee's text and Evans' photographs is that they dare to state the truth about these trapped people, without the usual Progressive-superficialities about "solving problems" (All They Need is a TVA). They have given us a *Works and Days* of our times, a chronicle of decay instead of growth, where the land does not nourish those who labor on it but destroys them. Perhaps the highest compliment one can pay their book is to say that it can be read, without too much of a wrench, after reading Rousset or Gliksman on the extreme expression of the modern entrapment: the Nazi and Soviet

*Oddly enough—or perhaps not at all oddly—the book is being revived in Paris. When Simone de Beauvoir was over here, I lent her my copy. She read it, was impressed, and has had some of it translated for *Les Temps Modernes*. A French edition might do better than the American.

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concentration camps. Hesiod chronicled a way of life; Agee and Evans, a way of death.

D.M.

II. "Sociological Poetry"

Dear Dwight:

I approached Agee's book with very definite expectations and needs in mind: From what you said when you gave it to me, I thought I might get some answers to a problem that has been consciously bothering me for six or seven years:

How can a writer report fully the "data" that social science enables him to turn up and at the same time include in his account the personal meanings that the subject often comes to have for him? Or: How can the writer master the detaching techniques necessary to modern understanding in such a way as to use them to feel again the materials and to express that feeling to the readers?

I put this question in terms of "social science" because every cobbler thinks leather is the only thing, but it is a problem faced by any writer on social and human topics. Social scientists make up a rationale and a ritual for the alienation inherent in most human observation and intellectual work today. They have developed several stereotyped ways of writing which do away with the full experience by keeping them detached throughout their operation. It is as if they are deadly afraid to take the chance of modifying themselves in the process of their work.

This is not a merely technical problem of analysis or of exposition. It is part of a much larger problem of style-as-orientation. And this larger issue, in turn, seems to arise from the bewildering quality and pace of our epoch and the unsureness of the modern intellectual's reaction to its human and inhuman features. We are reaching a point where we cannot even 'handle' any considerable part of our experience, much less search for more with special techniques, much less write it within the inherited styles of reflection and communication.

I bring all this up, because on the surface, Agee's text is a report of a field trip to the South during the middle thirties; but underneath, it is an attempt to document his full reactions to the whole experience of trying as a reporter to look at sharecroppers. As a report on the sharecropper south, it is one of the best pieces of "participant observation" I have ever read. As a document of how a man might take such an experience big, it is something of a stylistic pratfall.

We need some word with which to point, however crudely, at what is attempted here and at what I have tried to describe above. Maybe we could call it *sociological poetry*: It is a style of experience and expression that reports social facts and at the same time reveals their human meanings. As a reading experience, it stands somewhere between the thick facts and thin meanings of the ordinary sociological monograph and those art forms which in their attempts at meaningful reach do away with the facts, which they consider as anyway merely an excuse for imaginative construction. If we tried to make up formal rules for sociological poetry, they would have to do with the ratio of meaning to fact, and maybe success would be a sociological poem which contains the full human meaning in statements of apparent fact.

In certain passages, Agee comes close to success. Observe how he reports in a sentence or two the human significance of authority between landlord and tenant, white and Negro. Observe how he handles associations in descriptions, never letting them get in the way of the eye which they guide to the meanings. I think the best things in the volume are the sections on work (320ff) and on the summer Sunday in a small southern town (375ff). In some of these pages imagination and painstaking reporting become one and the same unit of sharp sight and controlled reactivity: they are visions.

But of course the quality about Agee that is best of all is his capacity for great indignation. Printed less than a decade ago, the book in its fine moral tone seems to be a product of some other epoch. For the spirit of our immediate times deadens our will very quickly, and makes moral indignation a rare and perilous thing. The greatest appeal of this book comes from Agee's capacity for indignation.

The motive and the frustration that lift his work above the plain sociological report is his enormous furiosity at the whole arrangement that sent him to the south and his crying terror at being personally estranged from the sharecroppers. This fury is what makes him take it big. He is furious with the magazine people who sent him into the south "to spy," and he is furious at himself for not being able to break through into the human relation he wants with the sharecroppers he is studying, or rather whom he is trying to love.

If I ask myself, why on the whole it just doesn't come off, the only answer I can find is that in taking it all so big, Agee gets in his own way. Instead of easing himself into the experience in order to clarify the communication of how it really is, he jumps into it, obscuring the scene and the actors and keeping the readers from taking it big. And underneath this is the fact that Agee is overwhelmed and self-indulgent; almost any time, he is likely to gush. He lacks, in this book, the self-discipline of the craftsman of experience: When you get through, you have more images of just Agee than of the southern sharecroppers, or even of Agee in the south among the sharecroppers.

This failure is most apparent when we contrast the magnificent Walker Evans photographs with Agee's prose. These photographs are wonderful because the cameraman never intrudes in the slightest way upon the scene he is showing you. The subjects of the photographs . . . family groups of sharecroppers, individuals among them, children, a house, a bed in a room . . . are just there, in a completely barefaced manner, in all their dignity of being, and with their very nature shining through. But Agee often gets in the way of what he would show you; and sometimes, romantically enough, there is only Agee and nothing else.

Given the difficulties of sociological poetry, however, I think that what is important about the book is the enormity of the self-chosen task; the effort recorded here should not be judged according to its success or failure, or even degree of success; rather we should speak of the

LET US NOW PRAISE FAMOUS MEN

by James Agee and Walker Evans

Originally published at $3.50, this book is now available to our readers at $2 a copy. Order direct from "Politics."

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appropriateness and rarity of the objective, remembering that Agee has himself written: "The deadliest blow the enemy of the human soul can strike is to do fury honor."

If you can think of any other examples of sociological poetry, let me know of them.

Yours,
WRIGHT MILLS

EPITAPH ON NUREMBERG. By Montgomery Belgion. London: The Falcon Press, Ltd. Three shillings.

The thesis of this grave and closely-reasoned little essay is contained in the quotation with which it concludes. "We conceal from ourselves," wrote Mr. T. S. Eliot in 1939, "the similarity of our society to those we execrate." This is given concrete illustration in Mr. Belgion's analysis of the Nuremberg trials. To call the conduct of those trials by the name of international justice, Mr. Belgion argues, is to accept the notion voiced by Thrasymachus and refuted by Socrates in one of the earliest books of the *Republic* of Plato, namely that justice is "whatever serves the interest of the stronger," a definition, ironically enough, reiterated by one of the Nuremberg defendants who hanged himself on the eve of his trial.

Thus what Mr. Belgion is concerned with proving is that, under the principles accepted by the International Military Tribunal, the Nazi crimes in Europe would have been fully justified if Germany had won the war. The Nazis would have been equally justified in hanging, on the pretext of war guilt, whomever they pleased among the vanquished, incuding of course those whom the opposite turn of the fate made judges at Nuremberg. His argument is based, first, upon the obvious point that there can be no real justice where the purposes of prosecutor and judge are identical. Second, the governments or armies of the nations whose representatives served as judges were themselves demonstrably guilty of crimes of the same character as were charged to the defendants. Mr. Belgion cites of course the instances of mass deportations, exterminations of minorities, imprisonments without judicial process and similar "crimes against humanity" by the Russians, surpassing in magnitude and horror even those of the Nazis. Indeed, crimes of this character were being perpetrated in the Russian zone of Germany while the Nuremberg trials were in progress.

As for the "war crimes," which included wholesale massacres of civilians and noncombatants, Mr. Belgion recalls the saturation bombings of German cities and towns and the atomic destruction of Hiroshima. As for the looting of occupied territories, there was the example of all four armies of occupation in Germany, before and during and after the trials, and of the "displaced persons" who looted with the encouragement and protection of the military. In the British army, says Mr. Belgion, looting, although forbidden in the regulations under the sternest penalties, was nevertheless "actively encouraged in all ranks." Mr. Belgion says, dryly, he has no specific information about the conduct of the American armies in Germany in this particular, but supposes that he can make a safe inference from what he observed of the conduct of American soldiers in liberated France. As for forced labor, there are, besides the deportations to the Russian slave camps, the examples of German war prisoners in France and Britain, many of them supplied from the United States under pretext of repatriation. As for the inhuman treatment of prisoners, there is the testimony of Julius Streicher at his trial that his American guards had beaten him, obliged him to kiss the feet of Negro soldiers, offered him urine when he asked for water, forced him to drink spittle by placing wedges in his mouth, kept him for four days naked in his cell. There is the case of Mr. Ezra Pound, the poet, now plausibly described as insane, who for nearly two months was kept in unsheltered solitary confinement without bed or other furniture, exposed by day to a fierce Italian sun and by night to the glare and heat of spotlights. There were the women members of the S. S. who were tortured by British guards. As for the "conspiracies against peace," on which Mr. Justice Jackson placed so much emphasis, Mr. Belgion had only to cite the Russian record in relation to Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Finland.

J. M. LALLY

(The above review is reprinted, with thanks, from the Washington weekly newsletter, "Human Events.")

ON WAR, SEX AND NEUROSIS. By Sigmund Freud. Edited by Sander Katz; preface and glossary by Paul Goodman. Arts & Science Press, 61 Dey Street, New York 7, N. Y. $3.00

These nine early essays by Freud, written between 1905 and 1918, are published here for the first time in one volume. One of them—"Dora, an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria"—has been cut: two sections, "The Second Dream" and "Postcript," are omitted. This omission is not mentioned in the text. "Dora" is printed in full in "Collected Papers," Vol. 3, Hogarth Press, London, 1936.

Paul Goodman's simple and well-expressed preface makes the excellent point that although the present-day physician, unlike Freud writing in 1905, need not apologize to the public for inquiring into the sexual habits of a patient, still we are all not so much freer in sexual matters. "Now we have learned also to repress our hypocrisy and timidity!"

Freud is a true radical; he strikes at the roots of our culture's hypocrisy. His patient, tolerant, modest objectivity—he never seems to propound, only to suggest—perhaps arises from this fact, that he is not a reformer. "We cannot predict," he writes in one of these essays, "whether other, perhaps greater, sacrifices, may not result from other institutions." Yet his inferences are often so logical and reasonable that the remedies seem to follow of themselves. Who now questions the proposition, so revolutionary for its time, that to practice deception on a child seeking sex information leads him to distrust his parents, to associate sex with guilt and shame, and even, in some cases, to discourage his intellectual curiosity in other fields of knowledge? ("The Sexual Enlightenment of Children," 1907.) But Freud could place little value on this "success"; in this same essay, he asserts the "impossibility of carrying through a reform in one particular without altering the foundations of the whole system." It is the essence of his teaching—and this may be his special "contribution" to social theory—that psychoanalysis, far from making things clearer, seems only to demonstrate how deeply complicated they really are!

The essays can be, in a general way, divided into two groups: those on neurosis as it is expressed in specific sexual behavior, and those concerned with our social in-

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stitutions. In the first group, there is the fascinating "Dora," Freud's first case history, a "love-story" about a girl's attachment to her father, her father's mistress, and the latter's husband. (Is it credible that some readers will pass up this type of reading for "boy wins girl"?) Also, three "Contributions to the Psychology of Love," in which are discussed some results of our culture's characteristic mother fixation and long period of sexual abstinence, as it affects men (who evade the abstinent rule but at the cost of a split between tenderness and sensuality), and the effect of the corresponding process on women (who obey more strictly the abstinent rule but remain frigid).

The second group comprises an essay on religion, showing the similarity between obsessive acts and religious practices; one on war, which offers as "consolation" for our disillusionment at the brutality of war that "our fellow-citizens have not sunk so low as we feared, because they had never risen as high as we believed"; and one on the problem of sublimation, which suggests that our cultural achievements are won through the renunciation of some direct sexual satisfaction, but since the capacity for sublimation is variable, the fight against sexuality can sometimes absorb all the available energy of the character. The first essay, "One of the Difficulties of Psychoanalysis," which explains man's resistance to psychoanalytic truths as the refusal to accept its shocking dictum that "the ego is not master in its own house," serves as introduction to the volume.

ETHEL GOLDWATER

YEARBOOK OF THE UNITED NATIONS, 1946-7. Department of Public Information, United Nations, Lake Success, N. Y. $10.00.

Such of our readers as have been wondering precisely what rooms in the Hague Peace Palace are assigned to the International Court of Justice can settle this question once for all by turning to page 245 of this volume, where they will find, under Article IV of Annex A of a resolution unanimously adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in a plenary session on December 11, 1946, the following information:

"The Court shall have the permanent and exclusive use of the following rooms:

"Nos. 8, 9, 11, 13, 27, 28, 38, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 301, 302, 303, and 306, as well as the room known as the 'Refectory' and the adjacent premises appertaining thereto."

Those readers, however, who do not feel curious about this point—and many others of like significance—will find the volume about as readable as the New York telephone book, and considerably less useful.

Bureaucratic narcissism has seldom been carried so far as in the publication of this huge* compilation of resolutions, covenants, official memoranda, organization-charts, and other legalistic folderol, all of it written (if it can be called writing) in a style calculated to convey the minimum of meaning in the maximum of words.

D.M.

* 991 pages; 4½ pounds; 11½" by 8½" by 2½".

NEW COLLEGE STANDARD DICTIONARY. Funk and Wagnalls. $5.00.

THE AMERICAN COLLEGE DICTIONARY. Random House. $5.00.

The appearance of two important new dictionaries in one year is quite an event in the philological world. It is also of lively interest to every one who does much writing or reading. Of the two, the Random House *American College Dictionary* seems to me much the best buy. It is far superior typographically (the Funk & Wagnalls job is hard on the eyes; looking up a word in it is a real exercise in optical skill); it is better bound; above all, it is richer, more precise and more up-to-date in the words it includes and how it defines them.

For example: RH gives two meanings for EXISTENTIALISM, FW none. An ANARCHIST according to FW is "a violent and destructive opponent of all government; a nihilist" (this is the definition the U.S. Immigration Service has been using since 1880); according to RH: "one who advocates anarchy as a political idea . . . an adherent of the social theory of Proudhon, Bakunin, or Kropotkin. . . ." EPISTEMOLOGY also fares better in RH, whose definitions generally are shorter and more precise. (Though to be fair, Max Planck's CONSTANT has made FW, while RH speaks only of Planck himself.) GEIGER COUNTERS are better described in RH than in FW. KRUPSKAYA has made only RH. TARTUFFE is an adjective only to FW, but RH knows that Moliere wrote a comedy with that title. RH includes both the Chou dynasty and Chou-En-lai, the Chinese Communist leader; FW omits both. Despite his importance as a Mayan god, KULKUL-KAN is passed over by both dictionaries.

ROBERT BEK-GRAN

Which Page of Jean-Paul Sartre's "The Age of Reason" Does New York Book Reviewer Read? Or, Noted Critic Buttons Up Fly To Ward Off Sore Throat.

"In only one important respect has Mr. Sutton departed from Sartre's text. The reader should be warned that Daniel, in the third chapter from the end, has decided to castrate himself, not, as the translation seems to suggest, to commit suicide by cutting his throat."
—Edmund Wilson in *The New Yorker*, August 2, 1947.

"The razor is there, on the night-table, wide open. He (Daniel) picks it up by the handle and looks at it. . . . He slips his finger down the edge of the blade, he feels at the tip of his finger the acid savor of a cut, he shudders: it is *my hand* that must do it all. . . . That red flower between his legs—*it is not there*; that red stain on the floor, *it is not there*. He looks at the floor. . . . *I shall be lying on the floor, inert, my trousers torn and sticky; the razor will be on the floor, red, jagged, and inert.* . . . But first that foul and filthy act must be done, carefully and patiently he must undo his buttons. . . . The beast is there, between his legs, erect and rigid. How loathsome! Well, my young friend, if it disgusts you too much, the razor lies there, on the table. *Dead the beast.* . . . "
—"The Age of Reason," by Jean-Paul Sartre, Translated from the French by Eric Sutton, pp. 352-354 (third chapter from the end).

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On Memory and Childhood Amnesia

Ernest G. Schachtel*

GREEK mythology celebrates Mnemosyne, the goddess of memory, as the mother of all art. She bore the nine muses to Zeus.[1] Centuries after the origin of this myth Plato banned poetry, the child of memory, from his ideal state as being idle and seductive. While lawmakers, generals, and inventors were useful for the common good, the fact that Homer was nothing but a wandering minstrel without a home and without a following proved how useless he was.[2] In the Odyssey the voices of the Sirens tempt Ulysses.

> *For never yet hath any man rowed past*
> *This isle in his black ship, till he hath heard*
> *The honeyed music of our lips, and goes*
> *His way delighted and a wiser man.*
> *For see, we know the whole tale of the travail*
> *That Greeks and Trojans suffered in wide Troy-land*
> *By Heaven's behest; yea, and all things we know*
> *That come to pass upon the fruitful earth.*

Their irresistible song, in evoking the past, promises a delight which will allow no future and will be the end of Ulysses' plans to return to an active life and to resume the rule of Ithaca. He prevents his shipmates from listening to the alluring voices by plugging their ears with wax, and he, too curious to renounce the pleasure, has himself chained to the ship's mast so that he will not be able to yield to their song and abandon the future.

This ambivalent attitude toward memory, especially toward its most potent form as embodied in the song, the epic, the tale, in poetry, music, fiction, and in all art, has accompanied the history of man. The modern, popular attitude, so widespread in the United States, the country of the most advanced industrial and technological civilization —that all art and poetry is "sissy"—is the latter-day implementation of the Platonic taboo. But with this difference: the contemporaries of Plato, and before them the shipmates of Ulysses, were susceptible to the promise of happiness that the song of the Sirens and of the muses contains, so that Ulysses and Plato, concerned with planning and not with the past, had to prevent their listening forcefully. Today the masses have internalized the ancient fear and prohibition of this alluring song and, in their contempt for it, express and repress both their longing for and their fear of the unknown vistas to which it might open the doors.

The profound fascination of memory of past experience and the double aspect of this fascination—its irresistible lure into the past with its promise of happiness and pleasure, and its threat to the kind of activity, planning, and purposeful thought and behavior encouraged by modern western civilization—have attracted the thought of two men in recent times who have made the most significant modern contribution to the ancient questions posed by the Greek myth: Sigmund Freud and Marcel Proust.

Both are aware of the antagonism inherent in memory, the conflict between reviving the past and actively participating in the present life of society. Both illuminate the nature of this conflict from different angles. Proust, the poet of memory, is ready to renounce all that people usually consider as active life, to renounce activity, enjoyment of the present moment, concern with the future, friendship, social intercourse, for the sublime happiness and profound truth recaptured in the most elusive of all treasures that man has hunted for, the "Remembrance of Things Past." He pursues this conflict between activity and memory into its most subtle manifestations. He knows that, as the awakening dreamer may lose the memory of his dream when he moves his limbs, opens his eyes, changes the position of his body, so the slightest motion may endanger and dispel the deep pleasure of the vision of the time in Combray, recaptured by the flavor of the *madeleine,* or the image of Venice conjured up by the sensation and the posture which the unevenness of the pavement in the court of the Guermantes town house brought to him as the unevenness of the pavement of San Marco had years ago. He does not dare to stir, for fear that the exhilarating vision may disappear. Bodily movement is the basic and simplest form of all activity endangering memory. Action itself, the attitude of activity, even the activity of enjoying the immediate present are seen by Proust as the antagonists, the incompatible alternative of memory. From here it is only one step to the insight that the memory which reveals the true vision of something past, the memory celebrated by Proust, is very different from the voluntary, everyday memory, the useful instrument needed by man every hour and every minute to recall a word, a figure, a date, to recognize a person or an object, to think of his plans, tasks, intentions, the eminently utilitarian memory characterized by the very fact that it serves the purposes of active and

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1 The words "muse" and "mnemosyne" derive from the same root: "men" or "man." Preller, Ludwig, *Griechische Mythologie;* Berlin 1872; vol. 1, p. 399, footnote 1. In German, too, the words "Gedächtnis" (memory) and "Dichtung" (poetry) derive from the same root "denken" (think); compare also "gedenken" (remember).

2 Plato, *Republic,* 599, 600.

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conventionally organized life in society. Proust speaks of the artificiality and untruth of the pictures that this memory furnishes, of its flat and uniform quality which cannot do justice to the unique flavor and the true qualities of anything remembered.

While for Proust the antagonism between society and memory of the significant past can be resolved only by renouncing either one or the other, Goethe seeks to reconcile the two. When, at a party, a toast was proposed to memory he objected vehemently with these words: "I do not recognize memory in the sense in which you mean it. Whatever we encounter that is great, beautiful, significant, need not be remembered from outside, need not be hunted up and laid hold of as it were. Rather, from the beginning, it must be woven into the fabric of our inmost self, must become one with it, create a new and better self in us and thus live and become a productive force in ourselves. There is no past that one is allowed to long for. There is only the eternally new, growing from the enlarged elements of the past; and genuine longing always must be productive, must create something new and better."[3]

Freud, not unlike Proust, approaches the problem of memory not from wondering what, or how well, or how much man remembers, but how hard it is to remember, how much is forgotten and not to be recovered at all or only with the greatest difficulty, and how the period richest in experience, the period of early childhood, is the one which usually is forgotten entirely save for a few apparently meaningless memory fragments. He finds this surprising since "we are informed that during those years which have left nothing but a few incomprehensible memory fragments, we have vividly reacted to impressions, that we have manifested human pain and pleasure and that we have expressed love, jealousy and other passions as they then affected us."[4] The few incomprehensible memory fragments left over from childhood, he considers as "concealing memories" (Deckerinnerungen),[5] and his painstaking work to decipher their language bears more than a superficial resemblance to Proust's attempt to decipher the hieroglyphic characters of the images of a cloud, a triangle, a belfry, a flower, a pebble—a most difficult undertaking, but the only way to the true memories enclosed in these signs which seemed to be only indifferent material objects or sensations. It was Freud who made the discovery that a conflict, leading to repression, is responsible for the difficulty of remembering the past. His well-known explanation of infantile amnesia is that the forgetting of childhood experiences is due to progressive repression of infantile sexuality, which reaches the peak of its manifestations in the third and fourth years of life. This repression is brought about by the "psychic forces of loathing, shame, and moral and esthetic ideal demands."[6] These forces have the sanction of society, they are the product of society, they are part and serve the purposes of the same conventionally organized life of society which moulds the functions of all social activity and of that "uniform" memory in which Proust saw the irreconcilable antagonists of the true remembrance of things past.

It is the purpose of this essay to explore further the dynamics of this conflict in memory which leads to the striking phenomenon of childhood amnesia as well as to the difficulty, encountered by Proust though more hidden to the average eye, of recovering *any* true picture of past experience. To speak of a conflict in memory is a convenient abbreviation. Formulated more explicitly and accurately, the intention of this presentation is to shed light on some of the factors and conflicts in man and his society which make it difficult if not impossible for him really to remember his past and especially his early childhood.

NO greater change in the needs of man occurs than that which takes place between early childhood and adulthood. Into this change have gone all the decisive formative influences of the culture transmitted by the parents, laying the fundament of the transformation into the grown-up, "useful" member of society from the little heathen, who is helpless but as yet sees nothing wrong with following the pleasure principle completely and immediately and who has an insatiable curiosity and capacity for experience. An explanation of childhood amnesia that takes into account these changes leads to the following tentative hypothesis:

The categories (or schemata) of adult memory are not suitable receptacles for early childhood experiences and therefore not fit to preserve these experiences and enable their recall. The functional capacity of the conscious, adult memory is usually limited to those types of experience which the adult consciously makes and is capable of making.

It is not merely the repression of a specific content, such as early sexual experiences, that accounts for the general childhood amnesia; the biologically, culturally, and socially influenced process of memory organization results in the formation of categories (schemata) of memory which are

3 Author's translation from *Goethe's Gespräche;* Herausgegeben von Flodoard Freiherr von Biedermann; Vol. 3, Leipzig 1910, p. 37 (November 4th, 1823). Compare with this Proust's *"Les vrais paradis sont les paradis qu'on a perdu."*

4 Sigmund Freud, Three Contributions to the Theory of Sex. In *The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud;* Random House, New York 1938; p. 581.

5 Sigmund Freud, Psychopathology of Everyday Life; see reference footnote 4, pp. 62-65.

6 Reference footnote 4, p. 583. Freud asserts that the development of these forces during the latency period is organically determined and that it "can occasionally be produced without the help of education." It is surprising that the man who discovered, explored, described, and emphasized over and over again the conflict between culture, society, and sexual instinct should have ascribed the ontogenetic origin of sexual inhibitions to organic factors as though he wanted to explain as natural those inhibitions which a culture, hostile to pleasure and to sex, has created, deepened, and strengthened in every imaginable way. The only explanation for such a strange and questionable hypothesis lies, to my mind, in Freud's and every great discoverer's tragic conflict between a powerful and lucid mind searching for truth and the person who never can entirely extricate himself from the thousand threads with which he is captured and tied to the prejudices, ideologies, falsehoods, and conventions of his time and society.

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not suitable vehicles to receive and reproduce experiences of the quality and intensity typical of early childhood. The world of modern western civilization has no use for this type of experience. In fact, it cannot permit itself to have any use for it; it cannot permit the memory of it, because such memory, if universal, would explode the restrictive social order of this civilization. No doubt the hostility of western civilization to pleasure, and to sexual pleasure as the strongest of all, is a most important factor operative in the transformation and education of the child into an adult who will be able to fulfill the role and the functions he has to take over in society and will be satisfied by them. Freud has not only called attention to the phenomenon of childhood amnesia but has also singled out a decisive factor in its genesis. I believe, however, that two points are important for a more adequate understanding of the phenomenon. First, it is not sufficiently clear why a repression of sexual experience should lead to a repression of all experience in early childhood. For this reason the assumption seems more likely that there must be something in the general quality of childhood experience which leads to the forgetting of that experience. Second, the phenomenon of childhood amnesia leads to a problem regarding the nature of repression, especially repression of childhood material. The term and concept of repression suggest that material which *per se* could be recalled is excluded from recall because of its traumatic nature. If the traumatic factor can be clarified and dissolved, the material is again accessible to recall. But even the most profound and prolonged psychoanalysis does not lead to a recovery of childhood memory; at best it unearths some incidents and feelings that had been forgotten. Childhood amnesia, then, may be due to a formation of the memory functions which makes them unsuitable to accommodate childhood experience, rather than exclusively to a censor repressing objectionable material which, without such repression, could and would be remembered. The adult is usually not capable of experiencing what the child experiences; more often than not he is not even capable of imagining what the child experiences. It would not be surprising, then, that he should be incapable of recalling his own childhood experiences since his whole mode of experiencing has changed. The person who remembers is the present person, a person who has changed considerably, whose interests, needs, fears, capacity for experience and emotion have changed. The two mechanisms of forgetting suggested here shade gradually and imperceptibly into one another. They are neither alternatives nor opposites, but rather the two ends of a continuous scale.

Both Freud and Proust speak of the autobiographical memory, and it is only with regard to this memory that the striking phenomenon of childhood amnesia and the less obvious difficulty of recovering any past experience may be observed. There is no specific childhood amnesia as far as the remembrance of words learned of objects and persons recognized is concerned. This type of material is remembered because, in contrast to the autobiographical past, it is constantly re-experienced and used and because it is essential for the orientation and adaptation of the growing child to his environment.

The autobiographical memory shows indeed in most persons, if not in all, the amnesia for their early childhood from birth to approximately the fifth or sixth years. Of course, there are gaps in the memory of many people for later periods of their lives also, probably more so for the period before than after puberty; but these gaps vary individually to a much greater extent than does the ubiquitous early childhood amnesia. If one believs Proust, life after childhood is not remembered either, save for the elusive flashes of a vision given only to the most sensitive and differentiated mind as the rare grace of a fortunate moment, which then the poet, with passionate devotion and patient labor, may try to transcribe and communicate.

FREUD contrasts the presumable riches of childhood experience, the child's great capacity for impressions and experience, with the poverty or total lack of memory of such rich experience. If one looks closely at the average adult's memory of the periods of his life after childhood, such memory, it is true, usually shows no great temporal gaps. It is fairly continuous. But its formal continuity in time is offset by barrenness in content, by an incapacity to reproduce anything that resembles a really rich, full, rounded, and alive experience. Even the most "exciting" events are remembered as milestones rather than as moments filled with the concrete abundance of life. Adult memory reflects life as a road with occasional signposts and milestones rather than as the landscape through which this road has led. The milestones are the measurements of time, the months and years, the empty count of time gone by, so many years spent here, so many years spent there, moving from one place to another, so many birthdays, and so forth. The signposts represent the outstanding events to which they point—entering college, the first job, marriage, birth of children, buying a house, a family celebration, a trip. But it is not the events that are remembered as they really happened and were experienced at the time. What is remembered is usually, more or less, only the fact that such an event took place. The signpost is remembered, not the place, the thing, the situation to which it points. And even these signposts themselves do not usually indicate the really significant moments in a person's life; rather they point to the events that are conventionally supposed to be significant, to the clichés which society has come to consider as the main stations of life. Thus the memories of the majority of people come to resemble increasingly the stereotyped answers to a questionnaire, in which life consists of time and place of birth, religious denomination, residence, educational degrees, job, marriage, number and birthdates of children, income, sickness and death. The average traveler, asked about his trip, will tell you how many miles he has made (how many years he has lived); how fast he went (how successful he was); what places he has visited—usually only the well known ones, often he visits only those that one "simply must have seen"—(the jobs he has held, the prestige he has gained). He can tell you whether the driving was smooth or rough, or whether somebody bumped his fender, but he will be quite unable to give you any real idea

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of the country through which he went. So the average traveler through life remembers chiefly what the road map or the guide book says, what he is supposed to remember because it is exactly what everybody else remembers too.

In the course of later childhood, adolescence, and adult life, perception and experience themselves develop increasingly into the rubber stamps of conventional clichés. The capacity to see and feel what is there gives way to the tendency to see and feel what one expects to see and feel, which, in turn, is what one is expected to see and feel because everybody else does.[7] Experience increasingly assumes the form of the cliché under which it will be recalled because this cliché is what conventionally is remembered by others. This is not the remembered situation itself, but the words which are customarily used to indicate this situation and the reactions which it is supposed to evoke. While this ubiquitous and powerful tendency toward pseudo-experience in terms of conventional clichés usually takes place unnoticed, it is quite articulate in some people and is used widely in advertising. There are people who experience a party, a visit to the movies, a play, a concert, a trip in the very words in which they are going to tell their friends about it; in fact, quite often, they anticipate such experience in these words. The experience is predigested, as it were, even before they have tasted of it. Like the unfortunate Midas, whose touch turned everything into gold so that he could not eat or drink, these people turn the potential nourishment of the anticipated experience into the sterile currency of the conventional phrase which exhausts their experience because they have seen, heard, felt nothing but this phrase with which later they will report to their friends the "exciting time" they have had. The advertising business seems to be quite aware of this. It does not have to promise a good book, a well-written and well-performed play, an entertaining or amusing movie. It suffices to say that the book, the play, the movie will be the talk of the town, of the next party, of one's friends. To have been there, to be able to say that one has been present at the performance, to have read the book even when one is unable to have the slightest personal reaction to it, is quite sufficient. But while Midas suffered tortures of starvation, the people under whose eyes every experience turns into a barren cliché do not know that they starve. Their starvation manifests itself merely in boredom or in restless activity and incapacity of any real enjoyment.

Memory is even more governed by conventional patterns than perception and experience are. One might say that, while all human experience, perception, and thought are eminently social—that is, determined by the socially prevailing ways of experiencing, perceiving, and thinking—memory is even more socialized, to an even higher degree dependent on the commonly accepted categories of what and how one remembers. "Rationalization," as psychoanalytic theory knows it, is but one type of such transformation of actual experience into individually and socially acceptable clichés. One important reason why memory is even more susceptible than experience and perception to such conventionalization is that experience and perception always are in *some*, however flimsy, immediate relation to the situation experienced, the object perceived, while memory is distant from it in time and space. The object of memory has less chance than the objects of experience and perception have to penetrate and do away with part of that glass, colored and ground by the social mores and viewpoints, through which man sees everything or fails to see it. Memory is a distance sense, as it were, and—to an even greater degree than the two other distance senses, vision and hearing—less immediately related to its objects than the proximity senses of smell, taste, and touch, and more influenced and moulded by the categories of the mind. Also like sight and hearing, only more so, memory is a phylogenetically and ontogenetically more differentiated, later, and more "spiritual" development than smell, taste, and touch. All this predestines memory to lose contact with actual experience and to substitute preformed, conventional patterns of thought for it. And, as will be seen later, it has significant bearing especially on the problem of early childhood amnesia.

IT is safe to assume that early childhood is the period of human life which is richest in experience. Everything is new to the newborn child. His gradual grasp of his environment and of the world around him are discoveries which, in experiential scope and quality, go far beyond any discovery that the most adventurous and daring explorer will ever make in his adult life. No Columbus, no Marco Polo has ever seen stranger and more fascinating and thoroughly absorbing sights than the child that learns to perceive, to taste, to smell, to touch, to hear and see, and to use his body, his senses, and his mind. No wonder that the child shows an insatiable curiosity. He has the whole world to discover. Education and learning, while on the one hand furthering this process of discovery, on the other hand gradually brake and finally stop it completely. There are relatively few adults who are fortunate enough to have retained something of the child's curiosity, his capacity for questioning and for wondering. The average adult "knows all the answers," which is exactly why he will never know even a single answer. He has ceased to wonder, to discover. He knows his way around, and it is indeed a way around and around the same conventional pattern, in which everything is familiar and nothing cause for wonder. It is this adult who answers the child's questions and, in answering, fails to answer them but instead acquaints the child with the conventional patterns of his civilization, which effectively close up the asking mouth and shut the wondering eye. Franz Kafka once formulated this aspect of education by saying that "probably all education is but two things, first, parrying of the ignorant children's impetuous assault on the truth and, second, gentle, imperceptible, step-by-step initiation of the humiliated children into the lie."

Most children go through a period of endless question-

7 Tolstoi gives a masterful description of how, in an adolescent girl during a visit to the opera, the experience of what happens on the stage changes from a genuine, naive, and fresh view to the conventional "appreciation" of the opera habitué. His account of her initial perceptions, by the way, is a surrealist description of opera more than half a century before surrealism. Tolstoi, *War and Peace*, part 8, chapters 9 and 10.

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ing. While at first they desire an answer, gradually their search turns into an almost automatic repetition of the same seemingly senseless question or into the related ritual of countering every answer with a new question. It is as though the child no longer really expected or perhaps wanted to obtain information by this type of questioning, but expressed only the last stubborn assault against the unbroken wall of adult "answers." The child has already almost forgotten what he wanted to know, but he still knows *that* he wanted to know and did not receive an answer. The automatic questioning may have the unconscious purpose of driving this point home to the adult. It is chiefly during the period of early childhood that the quality of the world around him changes for the growing child from a place where everything is new and to be explored—to be tasted, smelled, touched and handled, wondered about and marveled at—to a place where everything either has received a name and a label or is potentially capable of being "explained" by such a label, a process which will be pursued systematically in school. No experience, no object perceived with the quality of freshness, newness, of something wonder-full, can be preserved and recalled by the conventional concept of that object as designated in its conventional name in language. Even if, in modern western civilization, the capacity for such fresh experience has largely been deadened, most people, unless they have become complete automatons, have had glimpses of the exhilarating quality that makes fresh experience, unlabeled, so unique, concrete, and filled with life. They can realize, if their attention is called to it, the great difference between such experience and one which merely registers the label of things seen, the furtniture of the room, the familiar faces, the houses on the street. Yet this difference is small when compared with the difference that separates the young child's fresh experience and discoveries from the adult's recognition of the familiar clichés into which the automatic labeling of perception and language has transformed the objects around him. Since adult memory functions predominantly in terms of recalling clichés, the conventional schemata of things and experiences rather than the things and experiences themselves, it becomes apparent how ill-equipped, in fact incapable, such conventionalized memory is to recall the experiences of early childhood in their freshness, in the real significance which they had at that time. The age of discovery, early childhood, is buried deep under the age of routine familiarity, adulthood.

THE process of schematization and conventionalization and its effect on the raw material of experience, especially childhood experience, can be well observed in two of its specific developments which take place as the child learns to make use of his senses and to speak. Language, in its articulating and its obscuring function, may be considered first since the adult, too, encounters the problem of the incompatibility of experience with language and the consequent forgetting of experience or its distortion by the cliché of language. The fact that language is adult language, the language of an adult civilization, and that the infant and small child is moulded only very gradually from its natural existence into a member of the civilization into which it is born makes the discrepancy between his precivilized, unschematized experience and the categories of civilized, conventional language much greater. Yet between this discrepancy and that existing between the adult's experience and his language, there is a difference of degree rather than of kind. Everyone who has honestly tried to describe some genuine experience exactly, however small and insignificant it may have seemed, knows how difficult if not impossible that is. One might well say that the greatest problem of the writer or the poet is the temptation of language. At every step a word beckons, it seems so convenient, so suitable, one has heard or read it so often in a similar context, it sounds so well, it makes the phrase flow so smoothly. If he follows the temptation of this word, he will perhaps describe something that many people recognize at once, that they already know, that follows a familiar pattern; but he will have missed the nuance that distinguishes his experience from others, that makes it his own. If he wants to communicate that elusive nuance which in some way, however small, will be his contribution, a widening or opening of the scope of articulate human experience at some point, he has to fight constantly against the easy flow of words that offer themselves. Like the search for truth, which never reaches its goal yet never can be abandoned, the endeavor to articulate, express, and communicate an experience can never succeed completely. It consists of an approach, step by step, toward that distant vantage point, that bend of the road from which one hopes to see the real experience in its entirety and from where it will become visible to others—a point which is never reached. The lag, the discrepancy between experience and word is a productive force in man as long as he remains aware of it, as long as he knows and feels that his experience was in some way more than and different from what his concepts and words articulate. The awareness of this unexplored margin of experience, which may be its essential part, can turn into that productive energy which enables man to go one step closer to understanding and communicating his experience, and thus add to the scope of human insight. It is this awareness and the struggle and the ability to narrow the gap between experience and words which make the writer and the poet.

Two major trends operate in the direction of the eventual outcome of early childhood amnesia. First, the schemata for articulate experience and for recall of such experience are relatively slow and late in developing. They are entirely lacking in the earliest period of life and one could say generally that as they develop, experience gradually loses its character of newness and acquires the quality of familiarity and recognition. The tremendous amount of experience which the small child undergoes does not, therefore, find a proportionate variety of suitable vessels (schemata) for its preservation. Second, the quality of early childhood experience does not fit into the developing schemata of experience, thought, and memory since these are fashioned by the adult culture and all its biases, emphases, and taboos.

Both these trends become even more apparent if one

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considers them in connection with the development of the *senses* in the child. Such a consideration also shows how closely biological and cultural factors are interwoven in the causation of early childhood amnesia and how difficult, if not impossible, it is to draw a clear borderline between the two. What might have been a cultural factor in man's prehistory may well seem to the present observer like a biological development. Phylogenetically as well as ontogenetically the distance senses, sight and hearing, attain their full development later than the proximity senses, smell, taste, and touch. Sight and hearing are more highly differentiated and more closely linked up with the human mind than smell, taste, and touch. The latter senses, especially smell and taste, are neglected and to a considerable extent even tabooed by western civilization. They are the animalistic senses *par excellence*. Man, who has been engaged for thousands of years in a battle for control and mastery of nature outside and inside himself, especially western man, does not want to be reminded that he is not only man but also nature, also animal. Because of the cultural taboo on smell and taste—smell even more than taste, but the two are inseparable—it is even possible for the adult to realize clearly the effect which the discrepancy between experience on the one hand, and language and memory schemata, on the other hand, has on the capacity for recall, especially voluntary recall. English vocabulary, and equally the vocabulary of the other western languages, is conspicuously poor in words for the description of smells and tastes. Even when it comes to the flavor of wine or of a dish, in spite of the great material and historical role of drinking and eating, language is quite incapable of expressing any but the crudest differences, in taste. A wine is said to be dry, sweet, robust, fine, full and so on, but none of these words enables one to imagine the flavor and bouquet of the wine. Compared with this poverty of words, the vocabulary for the description of the visible world and its forms and colors is much richer. Even poetry has never succeeded in conjuring the flavor of a smell or taste, although it sometimes enables the imagination to evoke a visual image. For these reasons, the experience schemata for smell and taste sensations are relatively undeveloped. This is true even more of the memory schemata. A taste or a smell is usually remembered only involuntarily; that is, the former experience may be recognized by renewed encounter with the same stimulus. But it is difficult or impossible for most people to recall voluntarily the taste of a particular wine or the smell of a particular flower, animal, or person. In fact, most people are hardly aware of the differences in smell of different people.

Both pleasure and disgust are more intimately linked with the proximity senses than with the distance senses. The pleasure which a perfume, a taste, or a texture can give is much more of a bodily, physical one, hence also more akin to sexual pleasure, than is the more sublime pleasure aroused by sound and the least bodily of all pleasures, the sight of something beautiful. No other sense produces the emotion of disgust more easily and violently and provokes reactions of nausea and vomiting more readily than the olfactory sense. The infant is not disgusted by his feces; he quite likes their smell. Very many, if not most adults do not have the reaction of disgust to the smell of their own excretions; many do not show it with regard to the body odor or the excretions of a beloved person. As everybody knows, animals, especially dogs, are best able to tell one person from another and one dog from another by body and excretion smell. The infant, long before he knows and remembers how his mother looks, knows how she smells and tastes. Very likely, angry or frightened mother tastes and smells rather different from good or comfortable mother to the infant, just as she will look very different to him as he grows older.[8] In his growing experience of the world around him, the proximity senses at first have primacy over the distance senses. He tastes and sniffs and touches earlier and better than he perceives with eye and ear. In order to get really acquainted with something or somebody, he has to touch it and to put it in his mouth as he first did with his mother's nipple. Only very gradually and slowly does the emphasis shift from the proximity to the distance senses. This partly biological and phylogenetically determined shift is helped along powerfully and the development of taste and smell discouraged by the stringent taboos of the significant adults, who do not want baby to take everything in his mouth and who drastically and persistently in cleanliness education show their disgust with the most important objects of smell, those of the body and its excretions, so that the child cannot but feel that he has to refrain not only from the pleasure given by body and excretion odors but even from the discriminating perception of them. The proximity senses, which play such a great role in relations between animals and, if not repressed, in the sexual relations of man, are otherwise tabooed in interpersonal relations the more a culture or a group tends to isolate people, to put distance between them, and to prevent spontaneous relationships and the "natural" animal-like expressions of such relations. The emphasis on distance and the taboo on smell in modern society is more outspoken in the ruling than in the laboring class, distance being also a means of domination and of imposing authority. Disgust arises where the repression has not succeeded completely and a powerful deterrent is needed in order to bolster it.[9]

IN one other area of life, namely in the realm of *dreams*, one finds a general amnesia, although it is not quite so pervasive as that pertaining to early childhood. A closer study of the recall of dreams and especially of the period of awakening from a dream, when quite often one can observe its disappearance from memory or its transformation or fragmentation, may therefore add to, disprove, or corroborate the hypotheses developed so far. It is probable that the majority of dreams are not remembered at all.

8 Groddeck, speaking about the paramount importance of the sense of smell in infancy and early childhood, asserts that, even more than the dog, the child judges people and objects largely by their smell and, since the child is small or is being held on the lap, this means chiefly the smell of legs, lap, sexual and excretory organs. Groddeck, G., *The World of Man;* The C. W. Daniel Company, London 1934; p. 132.

9 Something of the importance of the deeply rooted taboo on smell in western man comes to the surface in the vituperative and hateful use that is made of body odor in interracial conflicts.

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A great many others are recalled in fragments only. Of those that are still remembered at the time of awakening, very many are forgotten in the course of the day, quite often in the first few minutes or the first hour of beginning the daily activities of rising, getting dressed, and so on. The relatively small proportion of dreams surviving in memory undergo a rapid transformation and fragmentation and usually they, too, are forgotten after a few days. If they are not forgotten, they lose increasingly their peculiar dream quality, and the peculiar language of the dream changes in the direction of conventionalization and rationalization. The dreams that make such a profound impression on the dreamer that they survive all these obstacles, although not without some damage, are rare indeed. Thus the question arises: What are the causes of this usual, general *dream-amnesia?* Why does one forget by far the greater part of his mental life going on during sleep, a life that in most people, judging from the fragments recalled, seems to be far more original, interesting, spontaneous, and creative than their waking life? It shares these latter qualities with early childhood which, from all one can observe, seems to be the most fascinating, spontaneous, original, and creative period in the life of most or perhaps of all people. Is it because of these qualities that the conventionalized memory schemata cannot reproduce the great majority of dreams and their real character?

Freud devotes a whole section of *The Interpretation of Dreams* to the problem of the forgetting of dreams. His purpose in this section is to defend the validity of dream interpretation against the objection that one does not really know his dreams because he either forgets or distorts them. Freud's answer to the problem is that the "forgetting of dreams depends far more on the resistance [to the dream thought] than on the mutually alien character of the waking and sleeping states" and that the distortion of the dream in recalling or recounting it is "the secondary and often misunderstanding elaboration of the dream by the agency of normal thinking" and thus "no more than a part of the elaboration to which dream thoughts are constantly subjected as a result of the dream-censorship." I think that the question should be raised whether "resistance" and "mutually alien character of the waking and sleeping states" are really, as Freud seems to assume, mutually exclusive and contradictory explanations of dream amnesia and dream distortion by waking thought. Or whether, as I believe, "resistance" is operative in the awake person, not only against the dream thought but against the whole quality and language of the dream, a resistance, to be sure, of a somewhat different character, yet fundamentally related to that which represses and censors those dream thoughts which are intolerable for consciousness.

In sleep and dream, man's activity in the outer world is suspended, especially his motor activity. Attention and perception are withdrawn from outer reality. The necessity to cope with the environment is interrupted for the duration of sleep. The stringent rules of logic and reason subside—rules which during waking life are geared to useful, rational, adaptative, conventional control of behavior and thought. The psyche receives leave, for the period of sleep, from the demands of active life in society. As Freud expresses it, endopsychic censorship is reduced. And the psyche makes good use of this short leave from the demands of reality. Its productions, seen from the usual, realistic viewpoint, seem utterly useless. It is true that other, older civilizations did not always share this viewpoint, but attributed considerable importance to dreams, sometimes greater importance than to waking thought. But measured with the yardstick of modern western civilization with its emphasis on useful, efficient production and work, dreams are really quite useless.

During sleep motor activity, most essential for dealing with the outer reality of objects and people, is reduced to a minimum. The dream is a mental production without any conscious effort and one in which the dreamer passively gives in to the images evoked by his phantasy. In that sense the dream is the opposite of *work* as it is known to western civilization, the opposite of efficiency. When awakening, it is often possible to catch hold of a dream [as Rorschach has pointed out] if one lies perfectly still and does not open his eyes. But the first movement, especially an active one like jumping out of bed, will very often chase the dream into oblivion. In other words, the return to the outer world through motor activity and reshifting of attention and perception to the environment leads to forgetting of the dream. This process is a quite general one and, as far as I have been able to observe, bears no relation to specific dream content. Therefore it seems to stem from the incompatibility of the extroversive attitude of waking with the introversive attitude of dreaming, rather than from resistance to specific strivings which are expressed in the dream thoughts. The antagonism between motor activity and dream recall brings to mind Proust's words, that he could recapture his former being only "dehors de l'action, de la jouissance immédiate" and that in such a moment he did not dare to budge lest he lose the refound memory of the past.

But even without the described effect of the resumption of motor activity on the voluntary recall of dreams, it seems obvious that the experience and memory schemata developed and formed by man's life in his society are much less suitable to preserve the phantastic world of the dream than to recall conventional waking experience. The awakening mind has to cope again with outer reality, and to this end has to remobilize all the patterns and schemata useful for, and developed by, the conventional social forms of life and work. Attention has to be paid to the environment. And the attitude of attention is to the mind what purposeful motor activity is to the body.

In the forgetting and distortion of dreams during waking life it is important to distinguish between that which is due to the resistance to and repression of a specific dream thought or dream content and that which is due to the incapacity of the conventional memory schemata to retain the phantastic general quality and the strange language of dreams. The distortion of a dream thought which resistance wants to keep from awareness has to be distinguished from the process of conventionalization which, more or less, *all* dream elements undergo because the medium of the dream language is incompatible with the medium of the conventional world of waking life. In the degree of this incom-

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patibility there are, of course, considerable variations between different people and, even more so, between different cultures. But modern western civilization with its streamlined efficiency, uniform mass culture, and emphasis on usefulness in terms of profitable, material production is particularly and strikingly at the opposite pole from the world of dreams.

THE hidden quality of lost memories, their separation from the rest of life, their inaccessibility, and their incompatibility with voluntary memory and with conventional, purposeful, daily activity are described lucidly by Proust. He compares the recesses of the lost memories to a thousand vases distributed on the various altitudes of the past years of one's life, filled with the particular atmosphere of that period of his life, and containing sometimes a gesture, a word, an insignificant act which, however, may be the key to the recapturing of the lost experiences, the lost past of his life. According to him, the very fact that the experience, the past time, has been forgotten and thus has remained isolated as at the bottom of a valley or on the peak of a summit, gives it an incomparable air of freshness and aliveness when it is recovered, *because it has not been able to form any link with the present*. In other words, it has not been distorted by the memory schemata, by the needs and fears of the present, by the routine of daily life. Proust's view, here, is almost identical with that of Freud, whose theory of memory postulates that *only* that which is unconscious can leave a permanent memory trace and that "becoming conscious and leaving behind a memory trace are processes incompatible with each other in the same system."[10]

In Proust's work the recovery of the forgotten past is characterized as the supreme satisfaction, carrying with it a sense of exhilarating happiness and constituting the very core of the work of art. This is not the place to discuss the profound meaning of his evaluation which, three thousand years after the Greek myth, again celebrates memory as the mother of art and poetry. Be it sufficient to say that in the conflict of modern society between efficient adaptation and activity, on the one hand, and the preservation and recovery of the total personality, which to him seems possible only by the fullest awareness of the individual past, Proust sides against his society and with the "lost paradises" of his own past. And it is true that each genuine recovery of forgotten experience and, with it, something of the person that one was when having the experience carries with it an element of enrichment, adds to the light of consciousness, and thus widens the conscious scope of one's life.

CULTURES vary in the degree to which they impose clichés on experience and memory. The more a society develops in the direction of mass conformism, whether such development be achieved by a totalitarian pattern or within a democratic framework by means of the employment market, education, the patterns of social life, advertising, press, radio, movies, best-sellers, and so on, the more stringent becomes the rule of the conventional experience and memory schemata in the lives of the members of that society. In the history of the last hundred years of western civilization the conventional schematization of experience and memory has become increasingly prevalent at an accelerating pace.

Mankind's belief in a lost paradise is repeated in the belief held by most people, in the individual myth of their happy childhood. Like most myths this one contains elements of both truth and illusion, is woven out of wishes, hopes, remembrance and sorrow, and hence has more than one meaning. One finds this belief even in people who have undergone cruel experiences as children and who had, without being or remaining aware of it, a childhood with hardly any love and affection from their parents. No doubt, one reason for the myth of happy childhood is that it bolsters parental authority and maintains a conventional prop of the authority of the family by asserting that one's parents were good and benevolent people who did everything for the good of their children, however much they may have done against it. And disappointed and suffering people, people without hope, want to believe that at least once there was a time in their life when they were happy. But the myth of happy childhood reflects also the truth that as in the myth of paradise lost, there was a time before animalistic innocence was lost, before pleasure-seeking nature and pleasure-forbidding culture clashed in the battle called education, a battle in which the child always is the loser. At no time is life so exclusively and directly governed by the pleasure principle as it is in early infancy; at no other time is man, especially civilized man, capable of abandoning himself so completely to pleasure and satisfaction. The myth of happy childhood takes the place of the lost memory of the actual riches, spontaneity, freshness of childhood experience, an experience which has been forgotten because there is no place for it in the adult memory schemata.

Childhood amnesia covers those aspects and experiences of the former personality which are incompatible with the culture. If they were remembered, man would demand that society affirm and accept the total personality with all its potentialities. In a society based on partial suppression of the personality such a demand, even the mere existence of a really free personality, would constitute a threat to the society. Hence it becomes necessary for the society that the remembrance of a time in which the potentialities of a fuller, freerer, and more spontaneous life were strongly present and alive be extinguished. In memory's service of this purpose one may distinguish two processes which overlap and shade into one another. One process leaves the culturally unacceptable or unusable experiences and the memory thereof to starvation by the expedient of providing no linguistic, conceptual, and memory schemata for them and by channeling later experience into the experience schemata of the culture. As the person, in the process of education, gradually comes to live more and more exclusively within the framework of the cutlurally and conventionally provided experience schemata, there is less

10. Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle;* The International Psycho-analytical Press, London 1922; p. 28. See also, The Interpretation of Dreams; reference footnote 7; pp. 488-491.

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and less to remind him of the possibility of trans-schematic experience.

Compared with this process, the dynamism of the taboo and of repression of individually or culturally tabooed experience and strivings is like the nightstick of the policeman compared with the gradual, slow, insinuating process of education in which some things are just not mentioned and others said to be for the best of the child. But the dynamism active in normal amnesia is even more subtle than what is usually called education. It is an education of which the educators are not aware and of which the child is too helpless and too inarticulate to have more than the vaguest feeling that something is happening to him. On the other hand, those strivings, qualities, and potentialities of the child which are too strong to be left behind to die by the side of the road of education and which endanger the current social and cultural pattern have to be battled by the more drastic means of taboo and repression. In this sphere sexuality and the conflict with parental authority play central roles. One might say that taboo and repression are the psychological cannons of society against the child and against man, whereas in normal amnesia society uses the method of blockade and slow starvation against those experiences and memories which do not fit into the cultural pattern and which do not equip man for his role in the social process. The two methods of warfare supplement each other and, in the siege conducted by society against the human potentialities and inclinations which transcend the cultural pattern, the cannon helps to maintain the blockade, and the blockade and ensuing starvation make it less necessary to use the cannon.

Hesiod tells us that Lethe (Forgetting) is the daughter of Eris (Strife).[11] Amnesia, normal and pathological, is indeed the daughter of conflict, the conflict between nature and society and the conflict in society, the conflict between society and man and the conflict within man. Lethe is the stream of the underworld, of forgetting, the stream which constantly flows and never retains. In the realm of Lethe dwell the Danaïdes, who are condemned eternally to pour water into a leaking vessel. Plato interprets this as the punishment of those unwise souls who leak, who cannot remember and are therefore always empty.[12]

But Mnemosyne is an older and more powerful goddess than Lethe. According to Hesiod she was one of the six Titanesses from whom all gods stem. And it was one of the world-founding deeds of Zeus that he begot the muses on her. Memory cannot be entirely extinguished in man, his capacity for experience cannot be entirely suppressed by schematization. It is in those experiences which transcend the cultural schemata, in those memories of experience which transcend the conventional memory schemata, that every new insight and every true work of art have their origin, and that the hope of progress, of a widening of the scope of human endeavor and human life, is founded.

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11 Hesiod, *Theogony*, 227.

12 Plato, *Gorgias*, 493 c 2. For the mythology of Mnemosyne and Lethe, see Kerényi, Karl, Mnemosyne-Lesmosyne, in *Die Geburt der Helena;* Rhein Verlag, Zuerich 1945.

Here and Now

PEACEMAKERS

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Early in April, some* 200 *persons met in Chicago for a three-day conference on ways of achieving "more disciplined and revolutionary pacifist activity." Out of this meeting came the formation of "Peacemakers," among whose executive committee members are David Dellinger, Julius Eichel, Cecil Hinshaw, George Houser, Ray Kepler, Dwight Macdonald, Milton Mayer, A. J. Muste, David Newton, Bayard Rustin and Ralph Templin. "Peacemakers" is not a membership organization; it is not, in fact an organization at all; its executive committee acts as a stimulating and coordinating center between individuals and groups willing to "practice what they preach" by (a) taking politically radical steps in furtherance of pacifism, and (b) changing their way of life in a cooperative, communal direction. The whole thing is still pretty vague, but at least a few people are trying to make a start toward a more radical kind of pacifist activity.*

There are five planks in the Peacemakers' platform, as follows:

1. *NON-VIOLENCE*

ALL men are members of one human family. They have to live as such in order to accomplish any good or to find any joy in life. A family cannot exist if its members are armed and try to build "defences" against each other, in spirit or physically. To strike back means further to disrupt the family and hence to harm oneself. Violence cannot remove violence, but only add to it. Therefore all violence, whether in "aggression" or "defense," is ruled out. Non-violence is the law of human life and of all productive work.

2. *UNILATERAL & UNIVERSAL DISARMAMENT*

THE only way in which we can end the threat of a Third World War is for the United States to give unquestionable proof of its desire to build world community. That proof would be for the United States to disarm completely now, and to share food, natural resources, and other goods with the needy peoples of the world.

This would remove the tension now created by American possession of the atomic bomb and the presence of our battleships and bombers in every region of the earth. This would calm the fears of American might now felt by the Russian people and a good many others. It would knock the props from under the war-propaganda of the Russian leaders. Thus war would, we are convinced, become impossible.

Even if, in the face of such a policy, the U.S.S.R. should invade the United States, the American people should not be trapped into prolonging the mutual slaughter by

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launching atomic and bacteriological warfare against the Russian people. In such an extremity it is still better not to do to others what in hate or fear they do to us, but to break the vicious circle. Therefore, we should meet invading armies with non-violent resistance, treating each individual with personal good will, but steadfastly resisting every totalitarian act by strikes, boycotts and non-cooperation. Were we to spend on organizing non-violent resistance a fraction of the money, energy, and brains which we are now devoting to preparation for total war, wonders could be accomplished, as the Gandhian movement in India has proven. Thus the invaders could presently be won to world community and the earth rid of war.

3. *RESISTANCE*

SO long as our government is promoting war (world destruction) we must withdraw our support from it by:

1. Refusing to serve in any branch of the armed forces, either in peace or war.
2. Refusing to make, handle or transport the weapons of war.
3. Refusing to be conscripted. Join now those who have already declared they will not register.
4. Considering refusal to pay taxes for war purposes, where possible—as some persons are already doing.
5. Spreading the idea of peacemaking, with the aim of being able to organize nation-wide non-violent strikes and non-cooperation movements to back up the program of non-violence, unilateral disarmament and economic democracy.

4. *POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY*

WE must bring into the economic and social order the same principles of human equality and brotherly love that we would apply to international relations. Class divisions mark Communist Russia, capitalist United States and all other regimes today. In place of them every person must gain an equal voice in the decisions which affect his work and life, and an equal share, in accordance with need, in the material products of economic life. We must begin now to ignore class divisions, develop cooperative enterprises, and practice economic equality in our relations with our fellow men.

5. *GROUP PARTICIPATION*

EVERY individual must find for himself the power to lead the life of non-violence and brotherhood, even if it is necessary to stand alone against great social pressure. But association with others who seek the same kind of life is the natural expression of the spirit of brotherhood. The work of Peacemakers is to be carried on through local groups, rather than through a centralized, national institution. These groups will provide individuals with needed intellectual, moral, and emotional support.

For further information contact

PEACEMAKERS
Mt. Morris House
2013 Fifth Avenue New York 35, N. Y.

RESISTANCE TO CONSCRIPTION

Chief current activity of Peacemakers is the circulation of the following statement, in cooperation with the Resist Conscription Committee:

WE are unconditionally opposed to the drive toward conscription, under a Selective Service system (draft) or Universal Military Training (UMT).

Just as Americans detested conscription in Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, and Communist Russia, we are opposed to the adoption of the same thing in the United States. No matter what the nation in question, conscription is a basic evil with which there must be no compromise.

Conscription fails to prevent war, foments further war-like preparation by our opponents, and denies fundamental freedoms of the individual, necessary to democracy. This violates our deepest convictions, that no person should be forcibly coerced into adopting a military way of life.

We believe human beings are fit for something better, something nobler, than slavery and training in the mass extermination of their fellows. Now is the time to proclaim our convictions and to assume our responsibilities in the light of them.

We will refuse to register under any conscription law which may be enacted and will counsel others of draft age, who are inwardly prepared, to refuse to register or to comply with any provisions of the law.

Several hundred signatures have so far been secured to this statement, including, in addition to the members of Peacemakers listed above, Bernard C. Clausen, Henry Hitt Crane, Richard B. Gregg, and Kenneth Patchen. A similar statement addressed especially to clergymen is being circulated by A. J. Muste.

Any reader who wants to add his name should drop a postcard to: Resist Conscription Committee, 2929 Broadway, New York 25, N. Y.

IS MACEDONIA BEATING THE SYSTEM, OR VICE VERSA?

Sir:

Like many of your readers, I have been depressed lately —by the enveloping general mess and by my own activity, which is not only irrelevant for changing the mess, the "system"; but is very much inside it, part of the business of business. Since leaving research, I have been involved in a woodworking company. Coming to it at a point when it was heavily in debt, I find myself swimming through audits and budgets and plans to put the operation on a business basis, analyzing prices of lumber and plywood, making decisions among a multiplicity of alternatives, none of which is of any intrinsic interest. The hard gray work is hardly compensated for by a daily journey to work in an open car over some lovely green mountains.

What has depressed me, of course, is the essential irrelevance to anything I value very much. Like yourself, I am not very optimistic about the chance of affecting the path of society. Still, I can remember the time when *I* had fuller enjoyments. So I have been looking about for a way of extricating myself and I was naturally curious and eager to read David Newton's article about Macedonia, the little 16-man community of your readers who, as your editorial note suggests, are doing something here and now to beat the system.

I read in this article that Macedonia has a capital value of "about $45 thousand" and "a considerable debt." That the Macedonians hope to have an audit by early 1948 showing where they stand financially. That they are "operating on a monthly deficit" now. So am I. So you may imagine my fascination with the author's statement that

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"we have come to an undertaking that is heavily in debt and have yet to get beyond the stage of making new debts to pay back old ones. We have succeeded in putting the dairy on a businesslike basis and have started the woodworking shop (!) from scratch." The description reached a nightmare intensity of reality in the account of the community meetings. "Probably the area of strongest disagreement is that regarding finances." Like any board of directors meetings. However, these meetings exceed in grimness any normal meeting of a board of directors—even those involving bickerings over expense accounts of the management: "We pay ourselves no wages, allowing ourselves only subsistence. Each family makes out a list of groceries . . . and these things are bought by one of the women. . . . While there is no surveillance of these lists, each family is supposed to be as economical as possible and the occasional extravagance is resented by those who feel themselves more self-denying." The author records his feeling also that the sexual life of the community has not been discussed fully enough in these meetings.

After this melancholy description, the concluding statement, "In short, we feel that . . . in spite of .. . frustrations, we are living as good a life as we can imagine" suggets only the completeness with which our imaginations are enveloped in the system. The only persuasive gesture in the account is the mention of a "walk to work through the evergreen woods." But I am certain they do not match my own green mountains. And these are hardly enough.

The masochistic nature of this plunge into business is illustrated by the founding fathers' selection, mentioned by the author, of the poorest land and the location in Georgia where the members of the community must avoid suspicion of nudism, free love, atheism, and interracialism. Few small businessmen are particularly bright in their choice of the tools and conditions and field of their operation. But generally they don't try to make their survival more precarious. And most people who reject the existing rules of conduct do not ordinarily choose to live in places demanding a maximum of conformity. The entire area around Macedonia is one of subsistence homesteads depending on logging and crops. And this ideal community would be rather less of a change for the local people even than it would be for most of us. It is not surprising that the local people who belonged to the community left when war jobs opened.

Is this sort of thing "beating the system?" Or is it merely beating ourselves? Macedonia seems to illustrate, not answer, our trouble. It is a sort of microchaos of our society, to be found not just here and now but anywhere and any time. Life there, in fact, is precisely like my present job, only you sleep in the factory and get much lower wages. Perhaps it is only to be expected that the idea of this cooperative community was suggested to its inmates by life in a C.O. prison camp.

Finally, the prospects for this community do not appear to be brighter than its grim present. From the business point of view, of course. Lumber and woodworking right now are experiencing a boom, which will end and very likely put the firm more deeply in debt; maybe out of business. Bankruptcy, however, is not an attack on the profit system and, I am afraid, neither would the survival of this firm be in any serious sense "the smallest step toward a better life."

J.R.S.

REPLY BY DAVID NEWTON:

Let me first of all express my regret that I do not know J.R.S. I mean no sarcasm when I say that I would very much like to know and talk to him and that I sympathize with his predicament.

Secondly, I can't see that any quarrel exists between us. I did my best to present an accurate, objective picture of the situation here at Macedonia Cooperative Community. If this kind of life does not appeal to J.R.S., for whatever reasons, there is no dispute. However, we would like to have him visit us, if he wishes to verify at first hand the conclusions he has made on the basis of 4000 words.

This last weekend six college students, readers of Politics, visited us. They are part of a group that plans to start a cooperative community. They had read the article and discussed it before they came. Their reaction to the criticism of J.R.S. was that he is an unhappy man who thinks that Macedonia is doing nothing to "beat the system," whereas my article had made little or no claim to doing that.

We are painfully aware that everything we do is done within the framework of "the system." The chief value of Macedonia to those who live here is the sense of status and security we get from living and working together as a group. We think that in time we *may* be able to do some things in the direction of changing at least a small part of the world for the better. We would prefer not to talk about that until we can point to some actual accomplishments. Further, some of our plans would be injured by being publicized at this time. Our ability to do anything beyond making a living depends upon our first successfully grubbing at the sordid details of economic existence, which J.R.S. seems to find so depressing.

The article was written last November. Since then we have made what seems to *us* some steps towards solving some of our problems. There is now little or no conflict regarding differences in family budgets. Financially, we broke even in the first three months of this year, and the dairy has yet to hit its top production for the summer. We have just received a contract to furnish kindergarten blocks for the Honolulu school system, and this assures two months of profitable work for the wood shop. We are in the final stages of forming a partnership association which will allow us to take over full financial and legal responsibility from Morris Mitchell.

The women of the community have worked out a plan of sharing their work in such a way that they will be able to contribute regular time to the project and at the same time have more hours free for home-making. The program involves such things as a more efficient laundry system, a part-time nursery school and having lunch together instead of at the separate homes. Whereas our land ten years ago was among the poorest in the county, it is now among the best, and we are not far from having our pastures developed to the point where we will have to buy little or no dairy feed. This last item, together with the fact that we have a garden large enough to take care of all our vegetable needs for a year, is in the direction of self-sufficiency and might be regarded, though we don't want to be immodest, as two small steps towards "beating the system."

One cooperative community does not make a revolution. However, a great many of these communities spread over the country could make for a more secure rural pat-

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tern and one less dependent than it is now on the farm machinery trust, the dairy trust, the Farm Bureau and the Department of Agriculture. For a fuller understanding of what this might mean, I respectfully refer J.R.S. to any good book on rural sociology and to the literature of the Farmers Union.

In conclusion, I sincerely hope that J.R.S. succeeds in his research for his own answer to the problem of what to do "here and now."

PACKAGES-TO-EUROPE

Tips on Package Agencies

A NUMBER of our package senders have asked us for the names of parcel services which are reliable and have good packages to offer. Here are a few outfits we can recommend:

SAFE (*Save a Friend in Europe, Inc.*), 40 *Exchange Place, NYC* 5: much the fastest, has a 21 lb. plus package costing $10. They send you a "speed voucher" which you send by airmail to the recipient who picks the package up over there. This service is only available for Austria and Germany now (unlike CARE they are operating in the Russian zone of Germany). *SAFE* offers much the fastest service: a package ordered by us on the 12th of April was received in Berlin on the 23rd of April, eleven days later. (CARE, on the other hand, we have found very slow: 2 months is about the average time.)

IRRC (*International Rescue and Relief Committee*), 103 *Park Ave., NYC* 17: has a list of packages varying in price from $2.75 to $10 (soap, rice, sugar, oil-fats, wool, household parcels, etc.). Parcels are shipped from Switzerland to all needy European countries and are insured.

Mutual Aid Food Package Service, 318 *West* 14 *St., NYC* 14: you select your own item at cooperative prices. They will obtain and send special things for you such as clothes and drugs and will include personal items in packages which they send for you. Their service charge is 50c for an 11 lb. box and $1 for 22 lbs. Packages can be insured. We have not used their service but it has been recommended to us by other package senders.

Arbeiter-Wohlfahrt Parcel Service, Inc., 216 *East* 80 *St., NYC* 21: has a list of packages varying in price from $3.90 to $16.90 (lentils, sugar, rice, meat, mixed products.) Their Help-Parcel-Of-The-Month-Club will send a parcel for you every month of what is needed most in Europe for $7.75 per parcel. They specialize in packages to Germany.

Meals for Millions, 119 *East* 19 *St., NYC* 3 (*west coast office*: 648 *So. Broadway, Los Angeles* 14, *Calif.*): put out a multi-purpose food or food extender, containing soy grits, protein derivatives and food yeast, fortified with Vitamins, etc. It costs about 3c a meal. A 72 meal package (including postage) costs $4.35.

Some Letters

I.

(*Last year there was a great disaster in the coal mines at Whitehaven, in Cumberland, England. A friend sent us the names of some of the widows, and we sent them packages. The following two letters are from Whitehaven widows.—N.M.*)

Dear Mrs. MacDonald,

Just a few lines to thank you for sending my name to Miss Beatrice Krauss. I have had a lovely letter from her and the children of Punahou school and they are going to send me some parcels. It was very kind of you and I thank you from the bottom of my heart and may God bless you. You see I have no people my husband was all I had the children are so small they just don't understand.

Billy is the oldest, he is 11 years old. Jim is 9, Rosemarie 7, Mitchell is 5. My husband had no people either not even a brother or sister. I don't know many people here as I belong to Ireland. The night-time is the worst when the children are abed, then I cry and think if only he was here. I love him so, he was so good and kind no matter how bad things were or when the children were sick he always seemed to make things look bright. That is why I missed him so, so you see what your kindness meant to me, so once again I thank you.

I remain your ever grateful friend

AMDLA CROFT

Dear Mrs. Macdonald,

I dont no how to thank you for your kind letter to just think so far away someone is thinking of us God took my man but he giv me some good and kind friends in his place but I could never forget him he was the best man that ever lived at least I thought that maybe it was just that I got the right kind of man we had been married 23 years and they were hard years at that many a thing we both done without for the sake of children we had a 11 and if I had him back I would live the same life over again just when we were beginning to stand on our feet I lost him I cant get over it when I think of him how happy he was that morning going to work and telling me he would hurry home but I have been waiting a long time now at night when I am sitting and I hear clogs coming down the street I just sit and wait hoping they were coming to my door then they go right on and my heart is Broke and I have good children my oldest is a Boy 21 then I have 3 dead and the next is a Boy 15 a Boy 14 a girl 12 a Boy 10 a Boy 8 a Boy 7 and the baby a Boy 2 so now you have them and you will see what doesnt fit one will fit another and I am glad of anything I can sew or darn and wash I get 2 pounds 5 shillings a week and they help me out of the fund every 4 weeks my husban was 42 and I am 40 and will you tell your friend I am very thankful and I will let any of them know as soon as I get there name and address I cant do much in return but I can pray so I will get my children and my self to ask God to reward yous all for your kindness to me God Bless yous and thank yous I am your Faithfully

MRS. RICHARDSON

(if there is anything you would like me to tell you just let me no)

II.

Dear Mrs. Macdonald,

I am so glad to have your friendly answer so quickly. To celebrate its arrival, I bought at once 2 "Camels" to make the right atmosphere. It is a special pleasure to have the honor of changing letters with an american lady, letters which perhaps allow to wander together a little portion of the life's way in the regions of the mind and in the really sorrow about the very welfare of the humanity. If one can find only a little number of very friends it is a great grace. You are so kind as to accept my letters in an imperfect English. I beg your pardon for the faults. In latin I could write more exactly.

I am a confessor of non-violence. The world has entirely forgotten the force and the power of the passive virtues, chiefly of the patience. To suffer force is better than to do it said already Socrates.

Since 1933 we are sitting in Germany like in a house without windows and in this house are living also honest persons. They are desirous to get connection with the spacious free world. Each letter, which is reaching us, is like a fresh breeze of delicate air coming into our suffocating grotto. Certainly the bodily misery is oppressing and hunger aches. But much more aches us intellectuals the mental loneliness. I pleaded always for the thesis, that all faults in public and private life result at the end of all from false thinking in the principles. For that I venerate so the greek philosopher Artistotle, because it is he, who always is standing on the ground of the cool, clear, and sober common

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sense. We only have to unfold his immense thoughts and to apply them in their unpretentious clearness upon our disarranged and destroyed ideas of right, justice and human dignity of the single person. In the reality out of thinking there are only single persons, each with his own head and nose.

I admire the manner in which Americans in unpretentious, indefatigable, simple and exact method enter into the individualities, a specifically aristotelian manner of thinking. On the contrary the Germans incline to lose themselves in vacuo of the highest principles and in a subjectivism, which since Kant has displaced the sound structure of the normal thinking.

Sometimes a rich man has no exact perspective for the situation of the poor. He cannot experience the embarassment of the poor. He does not grasp, why a man in a hurry does not take a car, because it does not come into his mind, that there are many people without money for a car. By this if the poor complains, is coming the impression of self-pity. Indeed the lamentation is only the description of the very facts. I can imagine that many Americans cannot imagine that educated persons of good family and in a good position have for months and months no butter or eggs or milk or even legumes.

I admit that an intellectual person has retardations in uttering complaints. On the other hand, if he does so do, he will say his saying in an especially clear, distinct and suggestive manner. It is he, who knows the destruction of the social organisation, who is conversant with the sources of the faults, who is convinced that healing must begin with the single, with his own person first. He knows that one can immediately act only in a few persons of good willing, and that this is a difficult and troublesome task.

I thank you very much for the address of Mr. B. I shall write him at once. Perhaps Mr. B. will be "our" family, to the care of which we are allowed to commend ourselves like two children, which are put away in a wild and dangerous wood. In any case having got the Care package we lived for a fortnight as the proverb says, like God in France. We ate our fill, and my little wife Sybil got again red cheeks. For me the coffee, for her the chocolate—she is a little dainty person!—these were festivities, for we had even coal for our stove.

Because you gave in the added letter the permission to give particulars about my wife and myself we do so, and that shall be certainly the last we say about us, for we will not tire you with personal shabbiness and constant croaking like scabbed beggars and tattered and torn egotists.

I am 57, Doctor of political science—but wholly without academic ambition—organist and writer of books concerning aristotelian, arabian and scholastic philosophy. I know especially the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas, died 1274. During Hitler's time I worked silently as a private teacher for languages and bookkeeping. Known as an opponent, I could never obtain any official position or permission for teaching. Having a special talent for educating and to get the confidence of young men, I could accomplish that only a few of my pupils were poisoned with the fascist heresy. They all got by my education a sound scepticism on the true of the great noise and the vociferation of the masses, on the lies of the state, on the strength of the loud report and crash of the prussian boots. In the war I was forced to work in a factory and my wife too. There I am today confidential clerk and manager of the social, housing, education department, for the taxes and insurances and the law businesses. Books of mine are printed, but now out of print. As soon as there is enough paper, two philosophical works will appear, an aristotelian logic and a psychology by an editor at Wiesbaden.

My wife Sybil has 37 years. We married in 1939 shortly before the war. She is an extraordinary amiable, unpretentious and charming person and the brightness of my days, although I am 20 years elder. She is a very good housewife and a first class cook, but today she has nothing to cook. Unfortunately she has an infirm leg. As a child she has fallen and now she goes a little lame. She cannot have fitting shoes for her exceedingly little feet, and for that her feet often ache. But this does not stop her in singing all the day like a bird and I am glad to meet her in the evening, when I come back from the factory. She is little and graceful and has the best bobbed hair of all ladies in our town. People stands in the street looking after her, because she is so well bobbed.

We have no children. The education of children to freely-thinking human beings is impossible in Germany with its contemptible teachers. The day before yesterday they were republicans, yesterday they were fascists, today they pretend to be democrats or christians. A pupil of mine said to me: our teachers are like the clock on the tower of the church, they reel after every wind. The influence of the state in school and in church was always destructive. But we have a scotch dog, named Dimas, with a genealogical tree far into the Scotch families in England. We nourish him with kitchen slops of the factory, in which I am eating myself.

We got over the war in some extent fortunately. Our house at Krefeld was fully destroyed. Our home at Uerdingen was damaged too. Almost all our linen and underclothing was burnt in a laundry just 7 days before the Americans came. Therefore my wife has almost nothing of stockings, shirts, nightgowns and no pocket handkerchiefs. But we are happy that we remained healthy and we hope to remain so. If one gets suffering now, all hope is over.

My wife and I we send you and your husband our warmest greetings and wishes. We thank you also for your further troubles about our bodily and mental welfare.

I remain, dear Mrs. Macdonald, Yours sincerely,

British Zone, Germany DR. WERNER
March 19, 1948

III.

My dear friend Lionel Anderson!

Your letter gave me a wonderful impression of your personality and of your meanings and your warm heart, your deep feelings. You are one of the men who may confess without using so great words: "God is in my heart" and "I am in the heart of God." I am so glad to be now able to *see* you. And to see each other and to meet each other is the deepest meaning of life—so it seems to me. Your course and working, your inmost life and thinking are directed by love. An english said once to me: love is the lost preterite of life.

I thank you for this fine view in your life. So we are really friends.

And what about me. Wo is who?

I am on August 5th this year a man—be not frightened—of 70 years aged. And I have to work bodily and spiritually more than everywhere in my whole life. That is, why I feel myself obliged to help as long it is day in these immense and tremendous needs. You know, I am a clergyman, no better, I should be servant of all. I am standing above the nations and races and all these differences. For my working for peace and suffering people, for the Jews especially during their awful persecutions I have been dismissed the first time in 1933, I was send in a camp for working cruel work, for digging in coldness and waters and so on as man of more than 65 and 67. But it didn't matter. I have been glad and courageous with my jewish and communists and others persecuted people, because I never have lost the hope and faith that God should one day overcome these cruel and awful power of Hitler.

And now—after arriving the american powers I am a free man, as Archdeacon of the protestant churches of North-Baden, my new title and work, I have the sorrows for more than 200 congregations in my heart and hands. As the leader of the ecumenical movement in Baden I have many tasks and always to travel round, to speak, to organize. As the protector of the Jewish people especially as far they are no more members of synagogues and so without the help of orthodox Jews, I have to speak for them against anti-semitism, to help them in spiritual and material needs. And they have many. How am I enjoyed, when I have the opportunity to give them food supplies or other things. As the president of the American-German Society, I may direct and help for better and better understanding each other.

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Shall I go further. O no, my dear friend. You must think: this man is vain. It is impossible to do so many things. It is true what I have told you and what I could tell you more. But nevertheless I am not content with me. My nights have only 5 hours. But sometimes I think, I had to use 24 hours the day. The needs and problems round me are so great, that I must always think: make haste, make haste; they die otherwise. My dear friend, you must understand it. Isn't it?

Therefore your helpful love is of such great value for me and us. Please, believe it. Of value for me, the overweighted man. Of value for my proteges. Of value for my sometimes hopeless heart. For your love is strengthening my spirit.

I have a family. My wife, often ill, but a miracle of energy is my protector and she stood always bravely on my side in my struggles with the Nazis and the Gestapo. And she is the beloved mother of 3 daughters and three sons in law (an ingenieur, a pianist—of greatest gifts—and a doctor for children illness). And the grandmother of our 9 grandchildren between ½ year and 8 years, our joy and sorrow!! So you see, there is much life. We are loaded and blessed people.

You write too kind about our eventual wishes and needs. I may not speak of it. But I am impressed by this fine manner of kindness.

I have there some young people who could be supported in their health by combined Vitamin tablettes. Many of them are never able to take their learned things in their memory. That is for us all a problem. Our memories deny by the want of fat. And so forther.

But—now I must close. My work calls me. This day will be a very heart day. 20 students of Oxford who stay here for a fortnight wait for a lecture about the question: The Church and the International affairs.

My dear friend, say please many many greetings to my dear friend Mrs. Nancy Macdonald (will you write of her personality more?) and receive please our thanks and respects and friendship.

Yours lovingly,

Heidelberg, July 12, 1947 HERMANN MAAS

Please excuse all my mistakes. I have never learnt english by grammaire, only by listening.

Mein lieber verehrter Mr. Lionel Anderson!

How have you surprised us by the wonderful and exceedingly precious packages you have send us to day. Some days ago I had my seventieth birthday and so I took your packages as the wonderfullest birthday-gifts I ever received. This enormous package full of the best coffee. The scent filled our rooms. My dear friend, you have rejoiced us as a dear Christmas man and I and my dears one are connected with you as with an old dear friend and relative. And you are doing this your lovework not like a stuffed shirt but rather yourself enjoying it. One feels it and that is such a fine way to help poor people.

I don't intend to sing a lamentation. O no. I don't like them. And we as german have no right to do so. We have such a great guilt upon our hearts and conscience and such enormous tasks for the future, that we may not use one minute for lamentation. I am now an old man but never in my life I had so many works and tasks as to day. I begin my day at 5½ in the morning and am closing it at eleven. And how many people are coming the whole day for advise and help and other things. And I am glad about it. So I rest a young man.

I could receive on my birthday many honours. The mayor and the other authorities of our famous city, the leaders of all political parties came with their congratulations, also the Military government and the leaders of all religious congregations, of the christian, protestant, roman-catholics and of the jewish synagogue! The Rector of our University presented me in midst of our famous professors the document by which I am nominated as doctor (Dr. h. c.) of our university honoris causa, the greatest honour in Germany. 5 german bishops visited me (of Berlin, Hannover, Stuttgart, Karlsruhe, Palatia). And the bishop of Chichester and Victor Gollancz, the famous writer in London telegraphed. I had more than 700 wonderful letters. My friends commented on my courage. I didn't feel so brave. I have done my only duty as a man of peace and freedom and justice. It was very often an uphill climb. But I like my work and I am liking all poor and persecuted people, all people who are longing for a new time.

Heidelberg, Aug. 15 HERMANN MAAS

My dear good friend!

What a surprising view, this view into the delighting parcel with such a lot of sweet things, candies, chocolate. We could not open the whole beauty. Our children and grandchildren must be surprised as we were this morning. And when the shine of the few selfmade candles will stream over these colourful little parcels I know they will exult at this never seen splendour. The look to it will be for them the first joy. And then—all this sweetness, this richly-coloured.

O, our dear friend. What a heart you have. You meditate, as we believe, day and night how you may rejoice us. And then, you work and arrange all your gift-parcels not as a dry and prosaic but as a poet. You are inventive by your good heart and your moving friendship for us. How may we thank you? How shall we manifest our joyful heart?

I will tell my people what love is. You must be the shining example for it. You are a Christmas-man, a "Weihnachtsmann" as we call these rare birds. When I have to speak next week in our american-german club under the shining Christmas-tree I will tell to our guests, ladies and gentlemen out of the troops in garrison and out of our best german well educated families, what one man may do for a new world, for peace and overcoming desperation and fear before the future. You help us to see in small things the divine ground. There was a man who dwelt in the East, 2000 years ago, and now we cannot look at a sheep or a sparrow, a lily or a cornfield, a raven or a sunset, a vineyard or a mountain, a man or woman or child, without thinking of Him; if this is not to be divine, what is it. May God Bless you and bestow on you a plenty of grace and joy and kindness!

We all love you and embrace our dearest friend

Yours lovingly,

Heidelberg, Dec. 11, 1947. HERMANN MAAS

IV.

PEPE M., *a Spanish republican refugee, writes from Bordeaux, France*:

Dear Sir:

It is my desire that when you receive these few lines you will be enjoying good health among all your family and friends. We are as usual.

Mr. L., after greeting you affectionately as you deserve, I go on to express to you in advance thousands and thousands of thanks for all that you are doing for us. Never would we have thought that after our disaster in Spain, losing the homeland, losing everything we had, even clothes and money, we would find you, without knowing you . . . this can never be forgotten, because once here in France, from concentration camp to concentration camp, losing one's health in the war with Germany, misery after misery, deprivation after deprivation, illnesses were inevitable. And even now that thanks to being well I have been working a year, what I do not comprehend is that after a year of working fifty and sixty hours a week we can't even eat.

Then not only can we not eat but we are faced with my wife's having to be operated on and we have not a centime with which to pay for the operation. Thanks to you who have sent us clothing, and half of the clothing you have sent, mine as well as Pepita's and Maria's, we have had to sell in order to pay the expenses, which are not yet over because she is not yet convalescing and has to have the doctor come to the house, and will have to spend three months in bed without doing anything. So Pepita and I have not asked for vacations this year. . . .

Just today they have reduced the bread ration to 200 grams per person, and black as coal. I don't know if the people who have money eat it or not, or have white bread or chicken or eggs or meat. I know that all this, I can't eat because I can't

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pay, or rather, that working, it seems to me, I produce for the nation, that is the government, because the government does not give me the wage that I need. My sons are not mine, no, they are the nation's, the government's, because as the government does not give me bread, how can I give it a son who would suffer hunger and poverty.

Mr. L., I do not know how to explain myself so that you understand. It is not that I ask clemency of you nor that I ask you for help. I ask you to live many years so that my wife and I and my children can one day recompense you for all you are doing for us. You cannot ever imagine the joy that you bring to this house when we receive a letter, a package, the same as when a mother nurses her child, these moments are never forgotten. You yourself probably realize that I am not master of myself, because I would like to tell you many things, other things. Such as that today, in Spain, the season opens for hunting partridge and rabbits. My brothers, my father and I, with ten or twelve friends, used to take our dogs and our shotguns and go off camping in the hills. . . .

Desiring you good health and likewise to all your family and friends, I close, sincerely,

PEPE M.

Nancy Macdonald, Politics, 45 Astor Place,
New York 3, N. Y.

☐ Please send me the address of a European family, plus full mailing instructions. I will undertake to send them _____ package(s) a month.

☐ I enclose $_____ to pay for food packages. I will undertake to send you $_____ a month to keep up the flow of packages.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ UNIT _____ STATE _____

Letters

To See Ourselves

Sir:

I was browsing the other evening among the fascinating statistics in Mr. Truman's latest budget proposals. Out of seventeen items listed by the *N. Y. Times,* eight dealt directly with past or impending war, and several of the others were closely related. "Foreign Aid," for instance, as we have been applying it in Greece and China and elsewhere should clearly be included among the "war" items. The amounts of money involved in these programs is heroic. "National Defense" alone was down for $11 billion or around 28% of the whole budget. If all the other items in the war list are included, they make up ¾ of the total or around $30 billion. Moreover, it turned out a few days later that this was only a *part* of what our military leaders felt they needed in order to defend us from being conquered by Russia. New military expenditures are being proposed almost weekly.

Looking over the vast sums which we are spending on war preparations, including atom bombs, supersonic rockets, jet planes and a multitude of other Science Fiction devices come to life to haunt us, it occurred to me that if we did not insist so often that we are a peaceloving people (and hence are doing all this solely for "defense") some people might get a different idea about us altogether. The Japanese, for instance, always claimed to be peaceloving too, but we got a very different impression about them long before Pearl Harbor, and we got this impression from much less conclusive evidence than we are giving the rest of the world today.

Browsing further, I found a copy of a Japanese periodical called *Contemporary Japan* for Dec., 1933. In it a journalist, Mr. Aiichi Nishinoiri, financial editor of a Tokyo newspaper, discussed Japan's current "Budgetary Dilemma." The Japanese leaders in 1933 felt that they were menaced by a dozen potential enemies. The Japanese Army and Navy, patriotically desirous of defending their homeland, had asked for an addition to their military budget. They asked for 800 million yen,—at that time about $267 million. The Finance Minister, however, according to Mr. Nishinoiri, did not feel it could "sanction the grant of so large a sum without question."

"It is true," his account continues, "that the Army and Navy authorities are not lacking in persuasive arguments to demonstrate the necessity for the new outlay of 800 million yen to meet defense requirements during the next fiscal year. They contend that Japan is heading towards a crisis in 1935 which can be met with confidence only if the national defense is strengthened. In that year, the Washington and London naval treaties are to be revised and there is little assurance that Great Britain and the US will look favorably upon Japan's statement of her needs. Also in that year Japan's withdrawal from the League of Nations wil become complete. The Soviet Union is meanwhile piling up armaments and concentrating them in Eastern Asia where they can be intended only for use in a war against Japan, while China has made a definite beginning towards the creation of a mammoth air force. Finally, the question of American policy in regard to China cannot be ignored."

Reading this account of how the world in 1933 looked to the Japanese, an American in 1948 is bound to feel uneasy. Our leaders today appropriate $40 billion for "defense" with as little debate as the Japanese leaders, in 1933, appropriated $267 million. Yet we officially charge against the Japanese civil and military leaders that from 1931 on they "deceived and mislead the people of Japan into embarking on a world conquest." In view of our current foreign policy, a great many people must be inclined to feel that the charge would make more sense if applied to us.

In a press conference not long ago, Secretary of Defense Forrestal told reporters that "Democracies do not plan agressive forces." That is probably a true statement. The catch is that peoples appear never to recognize for themselves the point at which they lose democracy.

NEW YORK CITY — HELEN MEARS

Letters from Cape Town (1)

Sir:

Last week, South Africa had her first general election since the war. The last election was in 1943, when Smuts and his United Party were returned to the House of Assembly in Cape Town for another five year term.

The United Party governed the country very well:

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South Africa's prestige rose in World affairs, (except when a small inkling of the Union's race prejudice leaked through to the "hollow men" of UNO), foreign capital was pouring into the country, immigrants from Britain were settling here in their thousands.

Its war record and its demobilization policy were the two main planks in the United Party's election platform. The Nationalists had only one plank to their structure: race prejudice, the disease that is eroding the whole life of this unfortunate country.

Those were the two main parties for which South Africans voted on the rainy Wednesday, May 26. Late that same night and early Thursday morning the first election results began to come in: nearly all of them United Party victories. The election score was then: United Party 30, Nats 10.

In the teashops that afternoon the matrons and the businessmen were confident of a United Party triumph, as in 1943. But as they watched the rain coming down in the streets outside, there was an undertone of anxiety: "You never know—we haven't had the results from the platteland yet." (The "Platteland" is the South African name for the plateaux of the Karroo and the Orange Free State, where live the farmers who produce wool, wheat, fruit and prejudice. They hate the British for their Boer War concentration camps, the Jews for their money-grubbing, and the colored people because their Boer forefathers mixed with these "Kaffirs" and they themselves are the coffee-colored result.)

In its political and race outlook the Cape Peninsula is almost cut off from the rest of South Africa. Here live the country's "wishy-washy liberals," the only people in the whole of this benighted land who can sit in the same buses and trains with non-Europeans without getting all petulant.

"Do You Want Your Daughter To Marry a Colored Man?" is the slogan on which the rest of the country lives. "We must maintain the Western way of life, and preserve White Civilization," the Nationalists cried to the electorate. They warned the whites that they were in danger of becoming more coffee-colored than they already were, because the Government was allowing Africans to travel on the same buses as Europeans.

The Nats found it difficult to persuade urban voters that white civilization was in danger: the man in the street had only to look around him. He saw swarms of brutal farm-lad policemen (they say that in about ten years every South African will have his own personal policeman), and a judicial system almost Balkan in its injustice (An African is summarily condemned to death in a language he doesn't understand for raping a white girl: for the same offense to a colored girl, a European is fined a few pounds).

To preserve white civilization the Nats have a scheme, which is frank, definite, and unworkable. This is to separate all colored people from the whites and put them in reserves where they can develop "along their own lines." This is unworkable because the Nats forget that white South Africans cannot develop along their own lines. The South African way of life has consisted up to now of the white man sitting on the "stoep" drinking coffee while the native does his work for him; he cannot take the native out of his kitchen without his whole life falling to bits.

At 8 o'clock on the night of Thursday, May 27, about 1,500 people gathered outside the newspaper office where I work (the *Cape Times*). The election scoreboard then read: United Party 60, Nats 20. Films and new results were shown on a screen erected on a building opposite, and the announcer would break in every now and again with a result he had just received.

"And now, Charlie Chaplin," said the announcer, and a roar of delight went up from the crowd, the greatest display of emotion of the whole evening. The Chaplin movements, old and jerky and full of ageless comedy, completely captured the crowd, a crowd of many races and languages. Malays in their red fezzes, colored mothers with their tiny children—dwarfed by malnutrition—beggars, young war veterans and students made up most of the crowd. At least two-thirds of the 1,500 were non-Europeans.

At nine o'clock the results from the "platteland" were beginning to come in—all of them Nationalist victories. I looked up at the scoreboard: United Party 60, Nats 39.

I went up to our office, which is on the third floor and overlooked the crowd. A few of my co-workers had also come up and were leaning out of the windows looking at the films and the crowd. I joined them.

I noticed a girl in the crowd, with frizzy bleached hair, wearing a light blue costume and galoshes, standing all by herself amid the red fezzes, the colored mothers and the taxi-drivers. "Christ, look at that blonde down there," said the young man next to me. "She's all alone—what about doing something about her?" On the screen, a cartoon came on; the crowd roared.

At half past nine, the results from the country were pouring in: the farmers had voted the United Party out of all the country seats. Now the crowd was cheering the Nationalist victories as loudly as it had cheered the UP at eight. It was the same crowd: the fezzes, the mothers and the urchins were still there, now cheering the successes of a party pledged to oppress them. It was a strange and terrible sight: you saw the helplessness of ordinary people and the power of politicians. For the crowd below me, all that was real on that cold wintry night was Charlie Chaplin. A young man in a dark brown "pork-pie" hat and raincoat came up to the blonde. She looked away quickly, but did not move away.

At 9:45, the election board read: UP 60, Nats 49. Then the surprise came: "General Smuts has been defeated at Standerton by the Nationalist candidate," the announcer said. A ragged cheer rose from the crowd. Behind me, the office was silent for a moment. Then there was a hum of shocked talk, and two of the women staff began to weep.

I turned to the window: the films were still going on. The young man in the brown hat and raincoat was now talking to the blonde in blue. She threw back her head and laughed at something he said. I went down the back stairs and into the crowd. "What do you think of it?" I asked a colored man on the edge of the crowd. He shrugged his shoulders and lifted up his hands. It was not a gesture of despair but expressed all the ignorance and acceptance of a people long oppressed and now entering an era of greater persecution.

Through the loudspeakers, a woman sang "Now Is The Hour" through her nose, and the crowd joined in. Another ancient Charlie Chaplin came on the screen, and the crowd cheered. A little group of drunk war veterans started chanting, "Up with Smuts! Down with Malan! (The Nationalist leader.) Down with Charlie Chaplin!" But their cracked voices were lost in the crowd, and it was

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clear that Malan and Chaplin were the victors of the evening.

At 11:45, the midnight mist began to roll in on a thinner crowd, still singing "Now Is The Hour." The Malays started singing their traditional song, "Daar Kom Alabama" ("There comes the Alabama"). I looked up at the election board: UP 65, Nats 57. There were about 20 more results to come in, nearly all from Nat strongholds.

At midnight, the film show and the election signs were closed down, and the street was emptied in a few minutes: except for one lone man leaning against the building opposite, alone in a litter of orange peels in the unswept street.

Next morning, South Africans awoke under a Nationalist Government, voted into power by a narrow majority. In the cafes, the Jews looked worried, and the African waiters talked of a "black revolution."

CLIVE SMALL

Cape Town, South Africa

Sir:

In a Bad-Worse choice, the worse has won. The election result does not mean much more than that. Or put it another way—it means a reduction in the number of privileged people. It means *perhaps* and *eventually* the invasion of Jewish rights. It means certainly more governmental arrogance towards all non-Afrikaners . . . and these range from Jews, Englishmen and Coloreds to Africans and Indians.

But South Africans may be given another chance to choose, for, with a majority of 3 or 4, a hostile Senate and a minority of popular (white) votes, Malan may decide soon to go to the country again to win an overwhelming majority.

And of course it is all very interesting and predictions and speculations have dominated the nation's thought, taking the place (sometimes) occupied by analysis and judgment. But then what could one expect? South Africa is a racially bigoted, politically amateurish, and socially retrograde land. Malanism is its natural expression and would long-ago have been its government but for the war, the National Crisis and so on.

One thing the election has proved: that any attempt to put across a civilized attitude to the Native peoples is doomed to failure. Liberalism, humanitarianism, good-works and all the bric-a-brac of outmoded reformism have been heartily repudiated. So have Anti-Fascism and the slogans and policies of the Stalinoids (in which are included various "non-political" groups and Ex-Service organizations).

It is likely that a "Committee of Un-South African Activities" will come into existence in some or other form.

There will probably be much heart-searching and panicking among white politicians who have at one time or another, been "Friends of the Soviet Union," "Socialists," or "Young Radicals." The masses, the dumb Africans who meekly carry endless passes, tax-papers, and the scars of disagreements with the police, they will carry on, doing the Nation's work, carrying the White Civilization which Mr. Malan has been elected to protect.

That this new government must be fought is clear. Where the forces exist to do that fighting is not. That the new government is worse than the last is true. But South Africans—no matter what party allegiance they claim—are, predominantly, getting the sort of government they deserve, they are declaring for the Anti-Comintern, for the Counter Revolution, for Reaction, for Fascism, for Racialism . . . but then they would have got these things sooner or later under any ALL-WHITE government.

A depressing letter? All contemporary politics are, as you and I have said all too often, depressing.

Cape Town, South Africa OLIVER CALDECOTT

HENRY WALLACE

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By Dwight Macdonald

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CONTRIBUTORS

WALTER KOLARZ, author of "Stalin and Eternal Russia," is a Czech refugee living in London. His article originally appeared in Victor Gollancz's "Left News" (Oct., 1946). Mr. Kolarz added new material and otherwise revised it for this issue. . . . WALTER PADLEY, well-known in I.L.P. circles in England, is secretary of the London Cooperative Societies' Joint Education Committee. "At the moment," he wrote us recently, "I'm 'doing a Reuther' in the 400,000 strong Distributive Workers' Union"; he is campaigning for president of the union against the present Stalinist officers. . . . LOUIS CLAIR and SEBASTIAN FRANCK are frequent contributors to "Politics" and other magazines. . . . NICOLAS NABOKOV, who lives in New York City, is a composer. His article is the text of his remarks at a meeting this Spring in New York City, under the auspices of Europe-America Groups, on the Soviet Culture Purge; other speakers were Meyer Schapiro, Lionel Trilling (whose talk appears in the June "Partisan Review"), and Dwight Macdonald (whose article on "Bureaucratic Culture" is based on his talk). . . . VLADIMIR WEIDLE's article is translated, with thanks, from the December, 1947, issue of George Bataille's excellent monthly, "Critique". . . . IRVING HOWE is a young journalist living in Princeton, N. J. He has contributed to "Commentary," "The Nation," "The New International," and "Partisan Review". . . . ERNEST G. SCHACHTEL is a psychologist who specializes in interpreting Rorschach tests. He turned to psychology after Hitler's coming to power forced him to give up his Berlin law practice. Three of his articles related to the theme of the one here printed are: "The Dynamic Perception and the Symbolism of Form" ("Psychiatry," 4, 1941); "On Color and Affect" ("Psychiatry," 6, 1943); and "Zum Begriff und zur Diagnose der Personlichkeit in den 'Personality Tests'" ("Seitschrift fuer Sozialforschung," 6, 1937; Librairie Alcan, Paris).

The Editor apologizes for the omission from this issue of Peter Blake's "A.M.G. in Germany—a Study in Stalinization" and his own article on the Wallace campaign. Both came out longer than expected, and had to be omitted for space reasons. They will appear in the Summer issue.

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